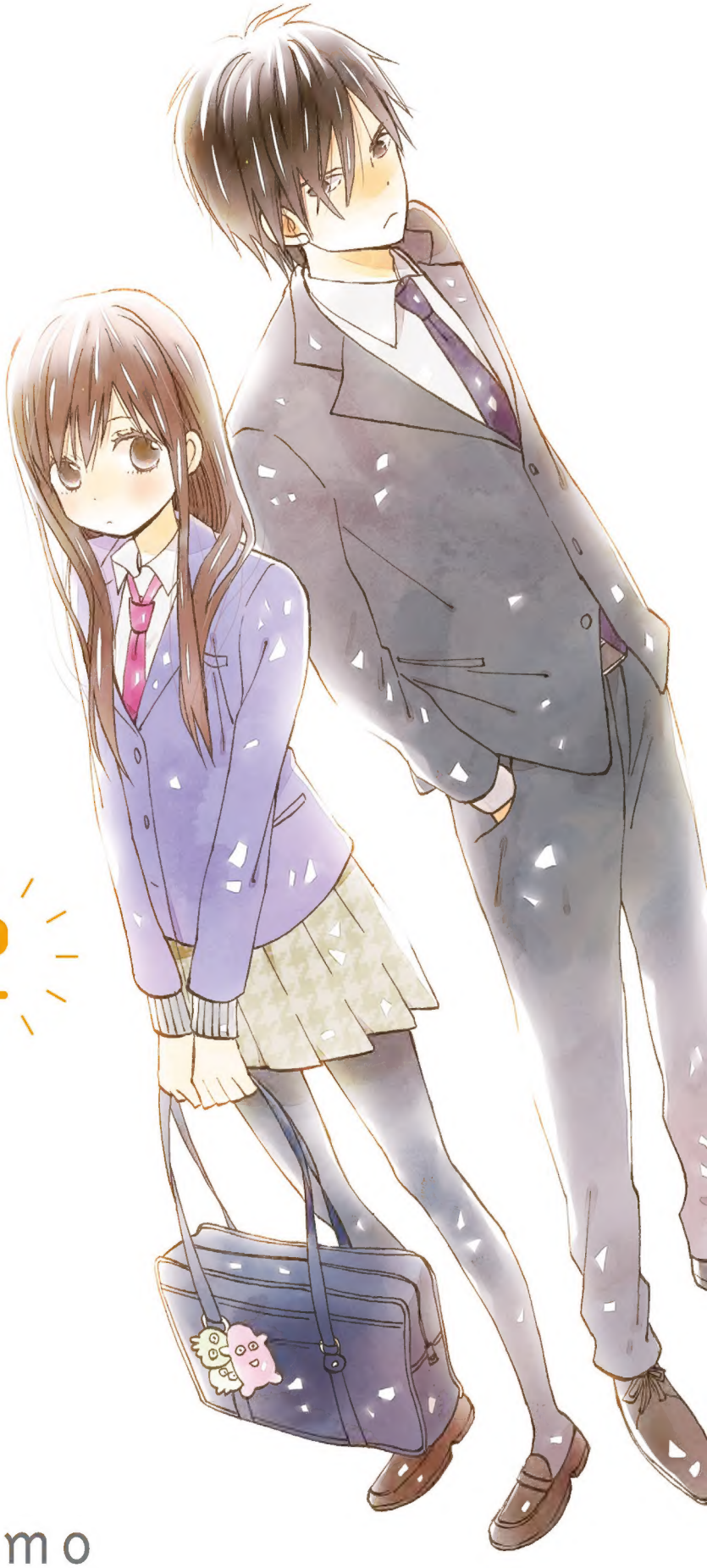
HOUSE of the SUN

2

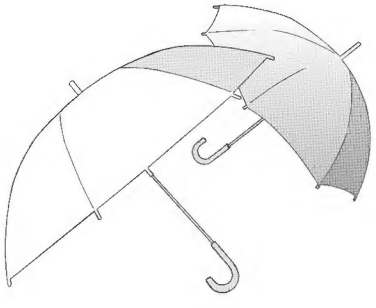


Taamo

HOUSE of the SUN

2

by Taamo



CONTENTS

Story 5
Radical-san
4

Story 6
Rain Country
43

Story 7
Radical's Crush
81

Story 8
Confession
120

CHARACTER

Mao Motomiya
Second-year high-school student. Without a place to call home, Mao moves into Hiro's house. Mao is secretly writing an online autobiography.

Roommates

Hiro Nakamura
Businessman with housewife tendencies. Mao's childhood friend. Hiro has been protecting his family's home ever since his parents died in his third year of high school, hoping to once again live with his sister and brother.

Friends

Coworkers

Classmates

Chi-chan
Mao's friend, who is in a different class. Could she have a crush on Oda-kun?

Oda-kun
Mao's classmate since first year. It seems that he likes Mao, so trouble may be brewing.

Sugimoto-san
She is Hiro's coworker and has a secret crush on him. There is a rumor that she is writing a novel.

STORY

As a young child, Mao spent a lot of time at the Nakamura house.

After her parents got divorced, Mao and her dad moved to a new neighborhood, but since he got remarried, she feels like she no longer has a home.

Hiro invites Mao to come live with him in the house he's been protecting since his parents died.

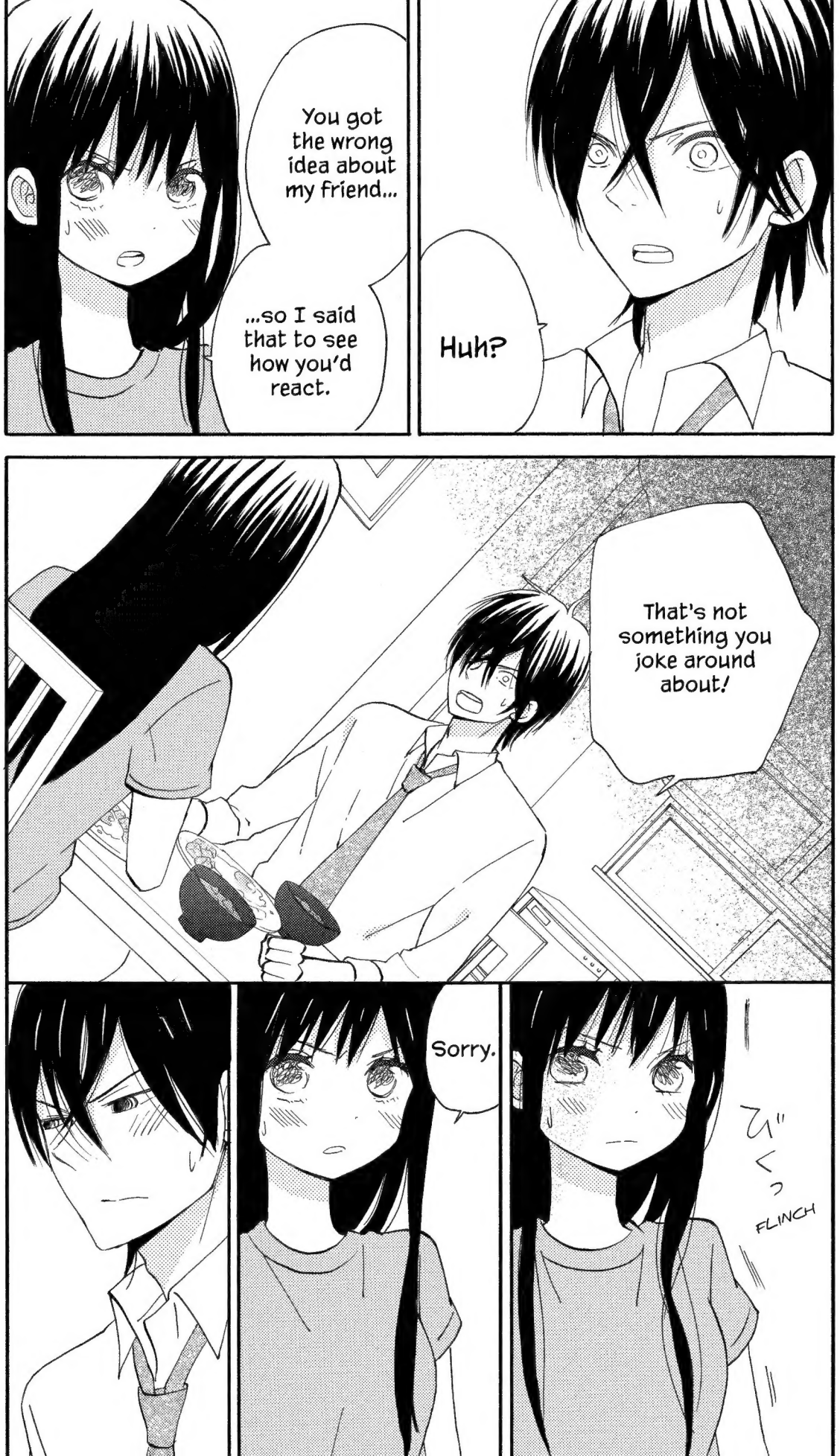
When Mao realizes she has strong feelings for Hiro, who has always been kind, she blurts out that she "likes" him...

story 5 Radical-san

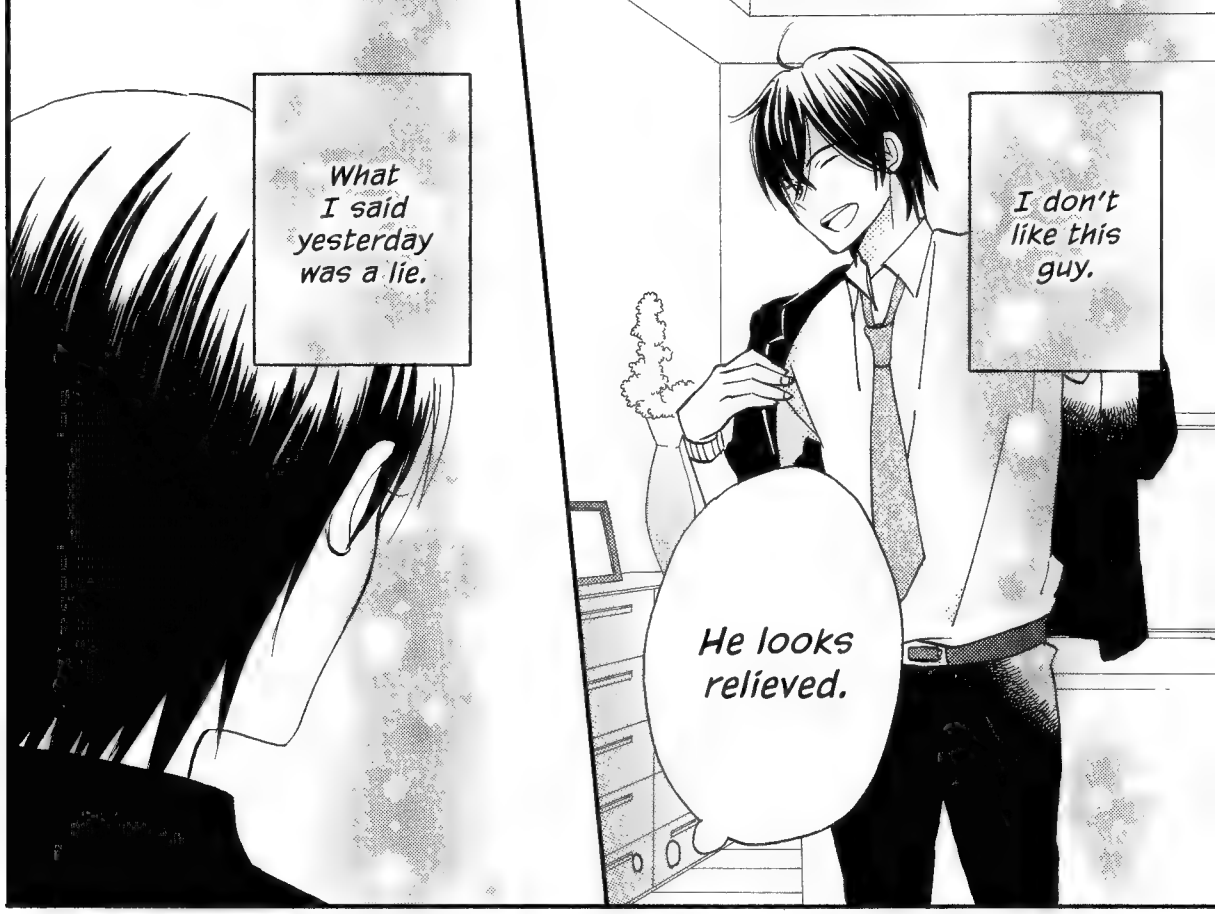
I like you, Hiro.
I knew this is what would happen.
Why did I blurt that out?

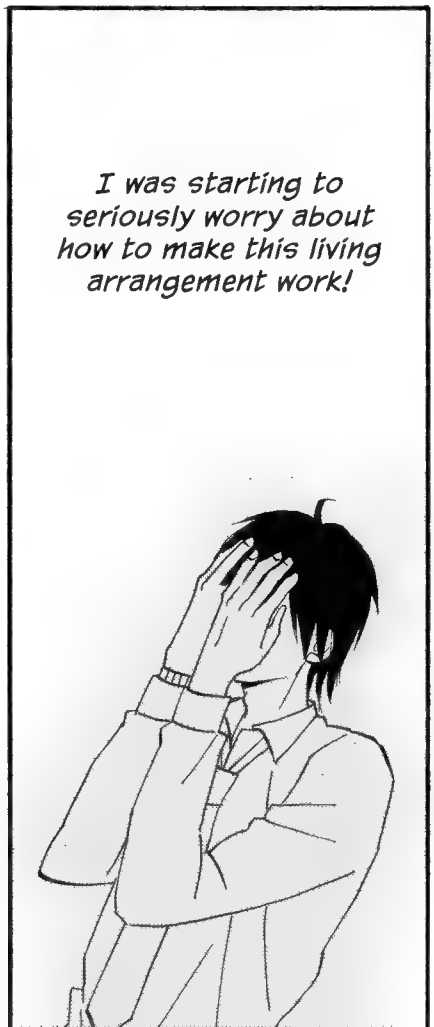
SILENCE
CLINK
カチャ
CLINK
カチャ
Is it different from other days...?
I don't get it...
Huh?
T-the fried egg really turned out well today.

Wakaba-chan's arm is so cute!
so cute!
The sky is blue, and the sun is beautiful.
Hiro really is acting strange...
I guess...
...what I said bothered him...!
...didn't it?
Hiro.
I was just joking yesterday, so you can forget about it.

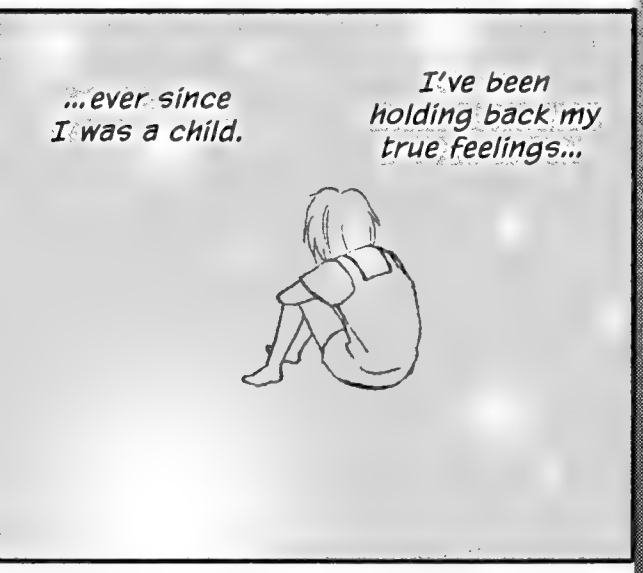

You got the wrong idea about my friend...
...so I said that to see how you'd react.
Huh?
That's not something you joke around about!
Sorry.
びくっ
FLINCH

I was starting to seriously worry about how to make this living arrangement work!
Argh! What the heck! Oh!
I'm going to work.
Don't be late for school.
Agh...
...
A joke.
I won't.


What I said yesterday was a lie.
I don't like this guy.
He looks relieved.

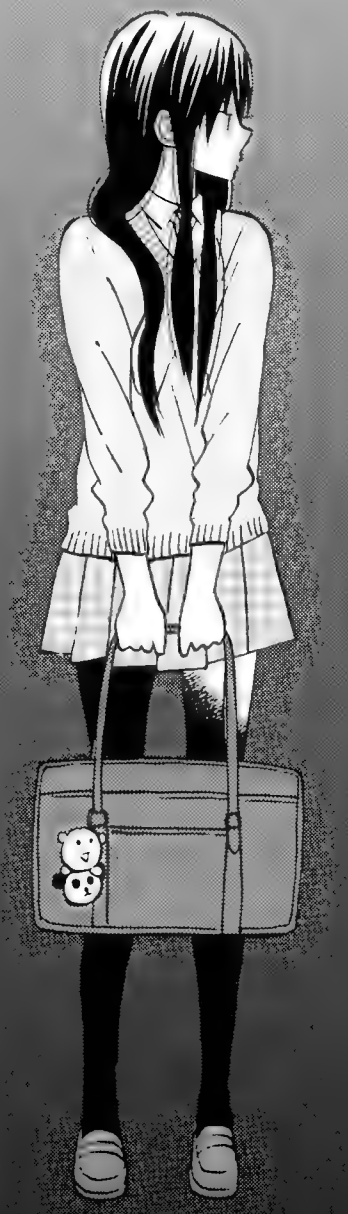

I was starting to seriously worry about how to make this living arrangement work!

If only that were true.

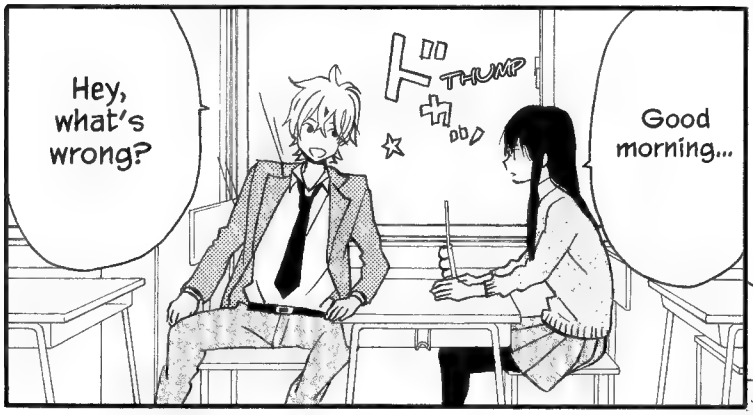


I'm used to it.

In the end, I really am a nuisance.



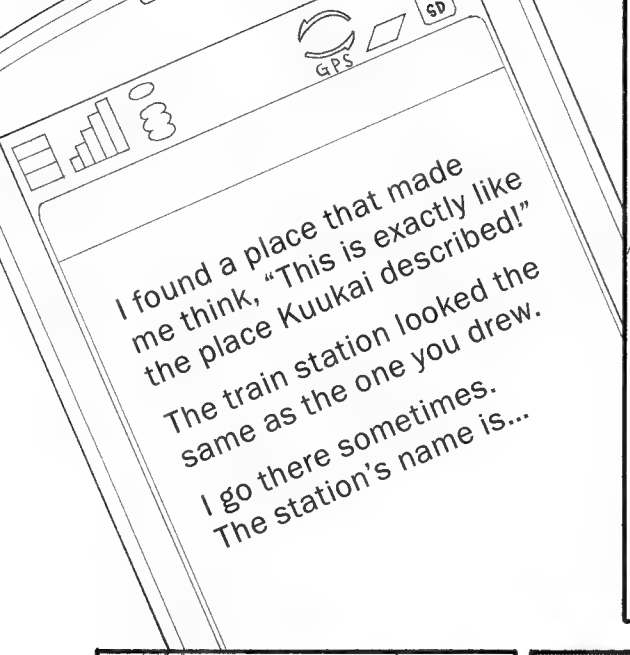
Hello! How are you?
It's me, Radical. Since you haven't posted any updates lately, I haven't had anything to keep me occupied.
Have you been busy?



Oh.
Right. I pretended it was about my mom instead of Hiro so I could ask for advice.
My mom?
What's with that face? You're the one who came to me for advice.
Well, I guess it's okay...
What's that supposed to mean?
I-I'm fine.
So you can ask me for more advice.
Actually, I've been reading lots of books.
???

Mao!
?
?
?
CLATTER
"カタ"
?
That's all.
He mentioned books...
I don't know if he was hitting on me...
Was Oda-kun hitting on you again?
I think it's more that he's changed...
Oda-kun is strange...
I hear he comes from a really big family, so I guess it must get complicated.
Yeah, he's been reading books about family lately.
Oh...

!
Is she complaining?
He used to be such a player.
Chi-chan, do you have a crush on Oda-kun?
ON POINT
W-what did you say?! Of course not!
...
Oh, I see. Sorry.
Okay.
I'll head back now.
It's hot in here...
...
FLAP
FLAP
FWIP


GPS
SD
I found a place that made me think, "This is exactly like the place Kuukai described!"
The train station looked the same as the one you drew.
I go there sometimes.
The station's name is...

Oh... I've got another message from Radical-san even though I never responded.

That station!

Does Radical-san live nearby?
That's the same station...

I'd like to meet you one day.
...

We must be neighbors or something!
It appears so...

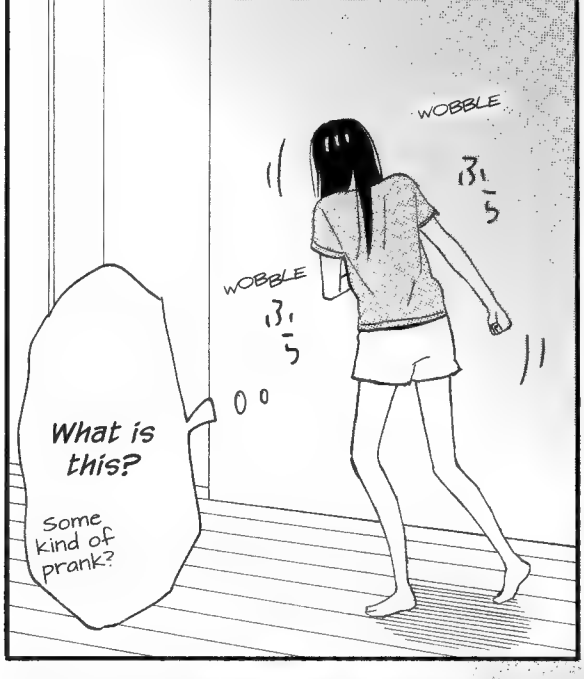
Meet Radical-san... Really?
It never crossed my mind.
Are they a girl or a boy?
And how old is Radical-san?
What would we talk about?
I'm nervous.
Hey.
What's with your face?
It's all red.
Huh?

It's just...
...hot in here...
That's because you have a fever. I'll call your house.
It's 38 degrees.
You need to go home early.
It's fine.
I'll go home on my own!
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
GRAB
My house...
I'll take her home.
Really?
I'll leave her to you, then.

It's obvious that you're not fine.
I'm fine. Just go back to school.
I don't want them to see each other if Hiro is home.
I have to go back to Hiro's house.
I don't want you to see that I'm not getting along with my mom.
That's it!
Maybe I can say that Hiro is my stepbrother...

That's okay, right?
I'll bring you to the closest station.
Yeah.
...
...
...
That's the reason I'm worried about you and tagging along.
Sorry...
Be careful walking home!

I won't bother him.
Hiro must be busy with work.
38.2°C
My fever is going up.
SLIDE
...worry him.
It'll just...
TWEET
TWEET
TWEET
TWEET
BLINK
FIDGET


WOBBLE
ふら
WOBBLE
ふら
What is this?
Some kind of prank?

There's something wrapped around my neck...! It smells like onions!
It reeks of onion!
カバッ
FWAP

すー
zzz

He's sleeping again...
...

...folk remedies?!
Like family remedies!
And this?
And this?
...look like...
These all...
What is that...?
There's egg inside.
Hiro...
Don't you have work?
ZZZ
Go to sleep.
Mao, drink that and get some rest, okay?
Oh, no!
CLATTER
ガバッ
Work!

I'll be home later.
See you later.
Make sure you go to sleep.
Okay.
Okay...
SLAM
TMP
TMP
TMP
SNUGGLE
SNUGGLE
He sure was in a rush.
FWIP
Sigh.
I should be used to this feeling by now.
It's strange...

So why do I feel lonelier now that I have a fever?
Wakaba-chan...
I mean, no one's ever taken care of me before.
I guess I just want someone by my side.
I'm so lucky to be in this house.
Some-thing feels heavy!

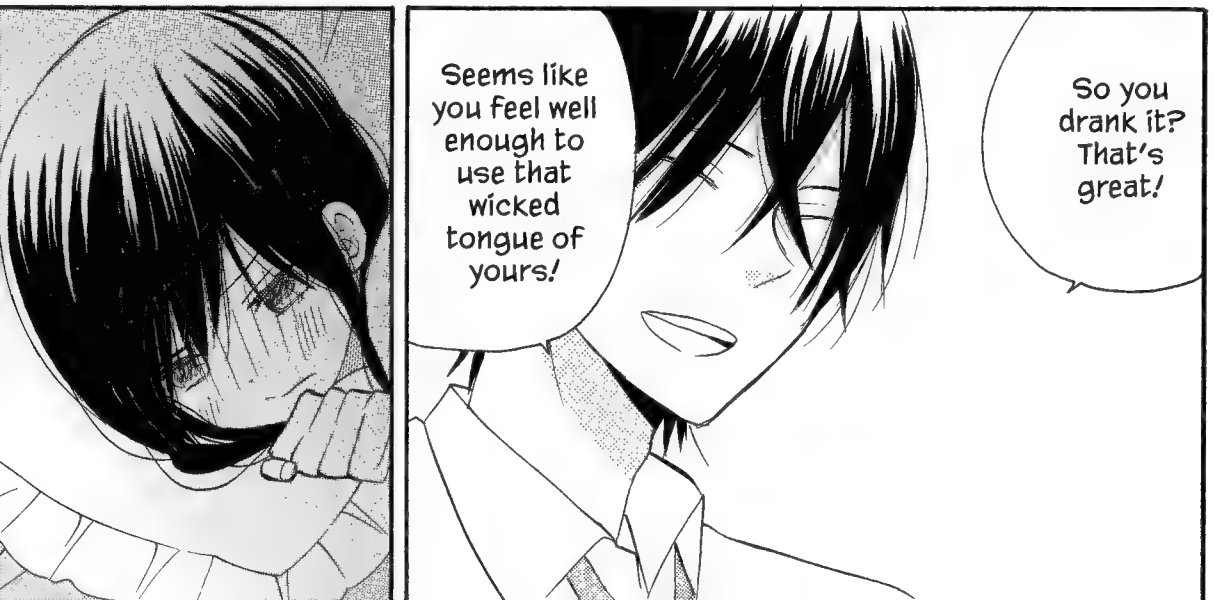
He's back!
PHEW
ほ
He's asleep...
すzzz
...
Hiro... He's always so tired that he falls asleep...

Huh? Are you awake?
Um...
Yeah.
Do you still have a fever?

I hate him.
It went down a little, but you're still a bit hot.
I hate him.
I hate him.
I hate him.
What are you doing here? What about work?
I was worried about you.
Now, go back to sleep.

I like him, after all!
WHOOSH
Also, I finished up all my work.

The stuff you left for me to drink was gross!
I hate you.
I hate him.
I hate him.
I hate him.
I hate him.
I hate him.
No...! It's just that I'm not used to being treated like family by anyone.
FWAP


Seems like you feel well enough to use that wicked tongue of yours!
So you drank it? That's great!

I have
to get rid of
this feeling.

Somewhere
far, far away.

Good morning.
You're imagining things.
Really? Nice try.
Thanks to you, I'm all better.
FWAP
I find that hard to believe.
She's so obvi-ous...
I meant it!
Well, if you're feeling better, that's good.
!! SILENCE
SCRUB
SCRUB
SCRUB

I have a promise to keep.
Hello! This is Radical.
I can't believe I'm going to meet you! I'm so happy.
I'll be carrying a black bag.
Actually, I haven't told Hiro about it, but...
...and I really want to meet Radical-san and talk.
ドキ
BADUMP
I'm feeling much better...
ドキ
BADUMP
I'm starting to feel nervous.
Everyone has a black bag...
A black bag?
It says that Radical-san is here!
カチ
TAP
カチ
TAP
カチ
TAP
I'll text Radical-san to try and see where they are.

Excuse me...
Are you Kuukai-san?
She's so pretty!
Y-yes.
Are you Radical-san?
Yes. I knew it! You're just like I imagined!

I'm so happy! I can't believe I'm meeting the famous Kuukai-san!
I really am a huge fan.
I can't believe you're a high-school student, after all!
Thank you.
Takashi always makes my heart flutter.
I'm writing a novel, too, but everything I write is influenced by your work.
I'm so happy.
This pretty girl reads my novel... and likes it...
A novel! I want to read it!
Oh...
But my novel is fanfiction. I don't know if you'd get it.
Fan-fiction?
Are you interested in the civil war era?

I love period dramas!
By the way, you haven't posted any updates lately. Did something happen?
...
...
Period dramas, huh... One of the characters is working out, but the other one...*
He's not exactly virtuous.
Not virtuous ...
Radical-san speaks in an unusual way sometimes.
*Radical-san likes Date Masamune and Kojuro Katakura, two legendary Japanese warriors that are often portrayed in period dramas.

What?!
Did you, perhaps...
...fall in love?
It's probably because I'm feeling the same way as I read.
I knew it! I got that feeling from reading your novel.
B-but...
You're blushing!
You really are in love with Takashi.

That's why I can relate!
?
Even though I like him, it's just a bother to him.
So I have to forget about him...
Three-dimensional?
Yes, instead of a two-dimensional character.
I've fallen for a three-dimensional person for the first time, too.
Now I have someone I can chat with, wbut just talking with him gives me this irresistible uplifting feeling...
Before he joined our company, I'd never been interested in or even spoken to a guy.
So I decided to forget about him.

So I gave up on that and decided to be nicer to myself.
It's not like I got dumped.
But I see him every day, so I can't forget him.
I don't think there's any rush.
Kuukai-san, too.
Let's both give it our all.
NOD

...so I can't forget him.
...every day...
But I see him...
BLUB
BLUB
BLUB
It's not something I can talk about with Chi-chan. It's easier with Radical-san because I don't really know her.
That's the first time I've ever talked about love.
Radical-san, too...

So, is it okay...
...for me to continue liking him?
I won't speak of it again.
Oh, Hiro is home.
CLANG
CLANG
Just say "welcome back" normally.
Normal! Normal!
Act normal, act normal...
I can't help but think about it...

Who is this?

Hello. My name is Taamo.
This is the second volume of *House of the Sun*.
I hope you enjoy it, even just a little bit!
-Taamo

story 6 Rain Country

Hiro.
Daiki.
It smells like it's going to rain.
Bring your umbrellas with you.

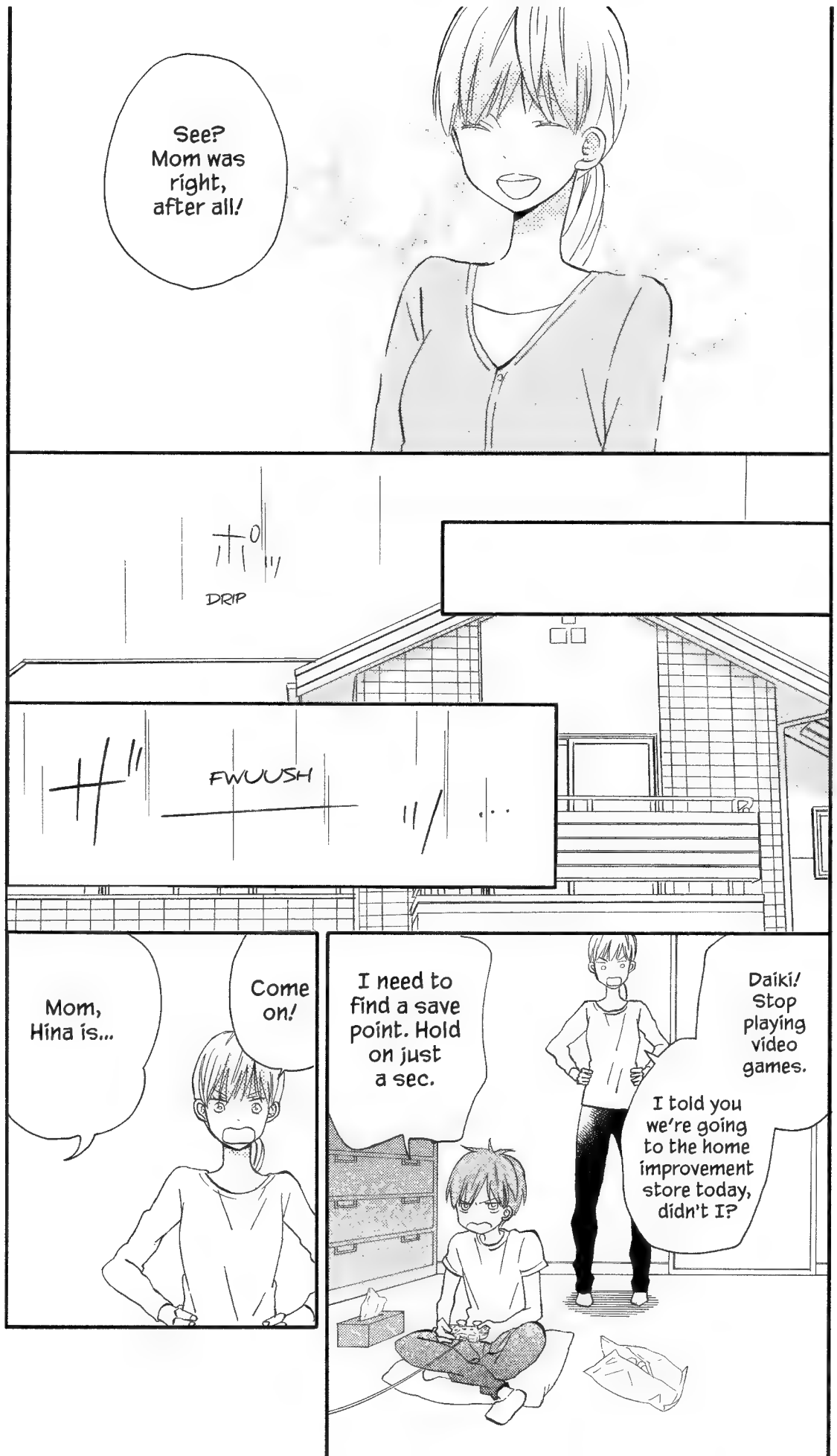
Huh?
Hina, you, too.

Daiki, are you gonna bring one?
SHAKE
SHAKE
ブンブン
It's just more stuff to carry.

Your mom is telling you to bring your umbrella.
There's only a 30% chance of rain today.
It's not gonna rain.
I'll bring my umbrella.
But it won't rain.

No way...!
SHHH
Oh, well, I guess I'll just get soaked...
ダッシュ
DASH
Every-one's going home, anyway.
Someone's been naughty.
SHH
ば
Rain shelter
Rain shelter
SHH SHH
ばば
Oh.
Don't "oh" me.

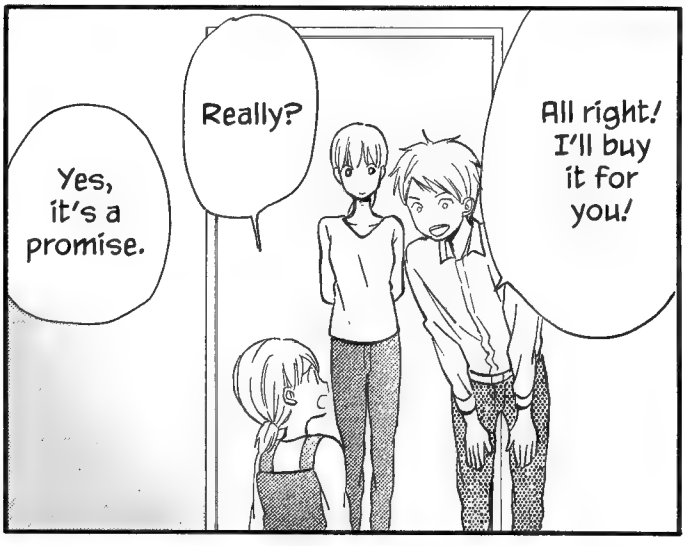
Here, I brought your umbrella.
No way! Thanks!
See you later.
Where are you going?
I'm going to see Daiki, of course.
You two never listen to me, after all.
Now, be careful, and go home.
It rained.
It rained, right?
Yeah.
You made it home without getting soaked, right?
...
...

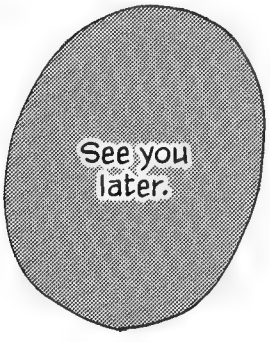

See? Mom was right, after all!
DRIP
FWUUSH
Mom, Hina is...
Come on!
I need to find a save point. Hold on just a sec.
Daiki! Stop playing video games.
I told you we're going to the home improvement store today, didn't I?

I'll watch over Hina and Daiki so you can go on to the store.
You aren't okay at all.
She ate too much ice cream. She says her stomach hurts.
I'm fine...
Are you okay?
シャキーン
SHAA

You can't go. But Mom will buy you one.
びぇぇぇ
SHRIEK
No! I want to go, too! I want to buy a cooking set!

We'll be back soon.
Look after them for us!

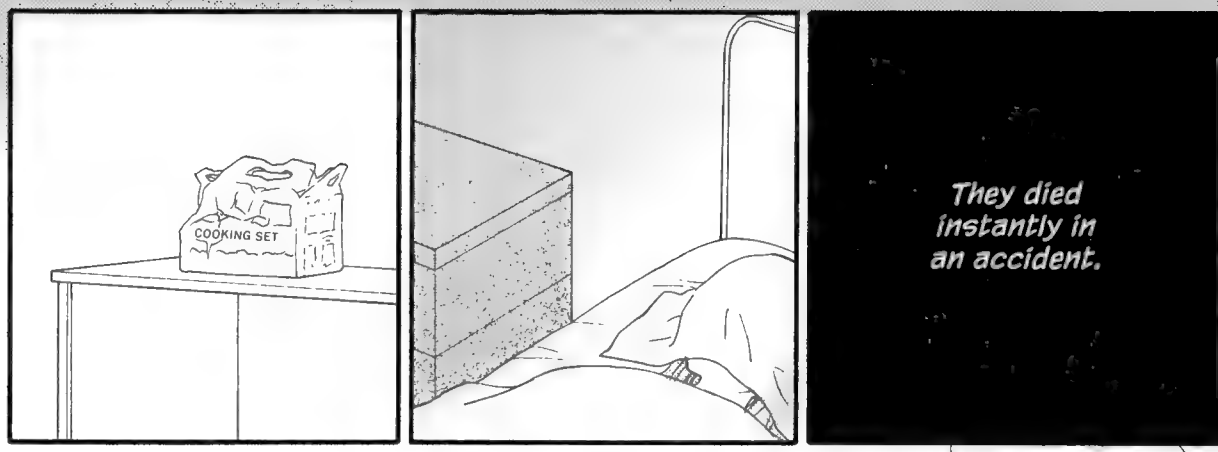

Yes, it's a promise.
Really?
All right! I'll buy it for you!

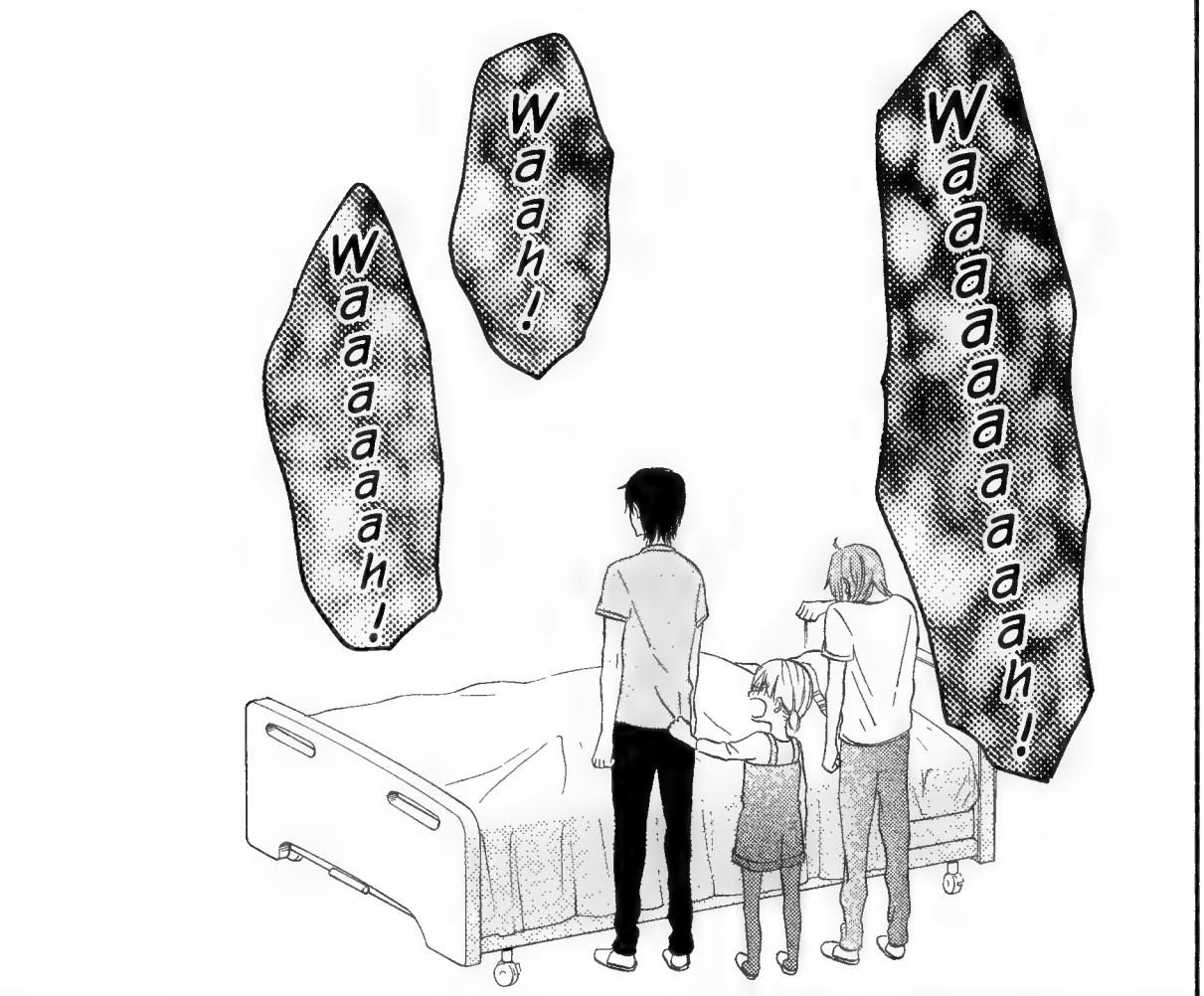

See you later.

Mom and Dad are taking a long time.
My stomach doesn't even hurt anymore.
Cooking set!
They must have stopped somewhere to buy dinner.
Daiki, it's bad for your eyes to play video games too much, so give it a rest.
It must be Mom and Dad.
RING RING RING RING
RING RING RING RING RING RING
Hello?
Nakamura household.
Yes?

On that rainy day...

...our parents died.





I have to act strong.

How will they feel if I start crying?

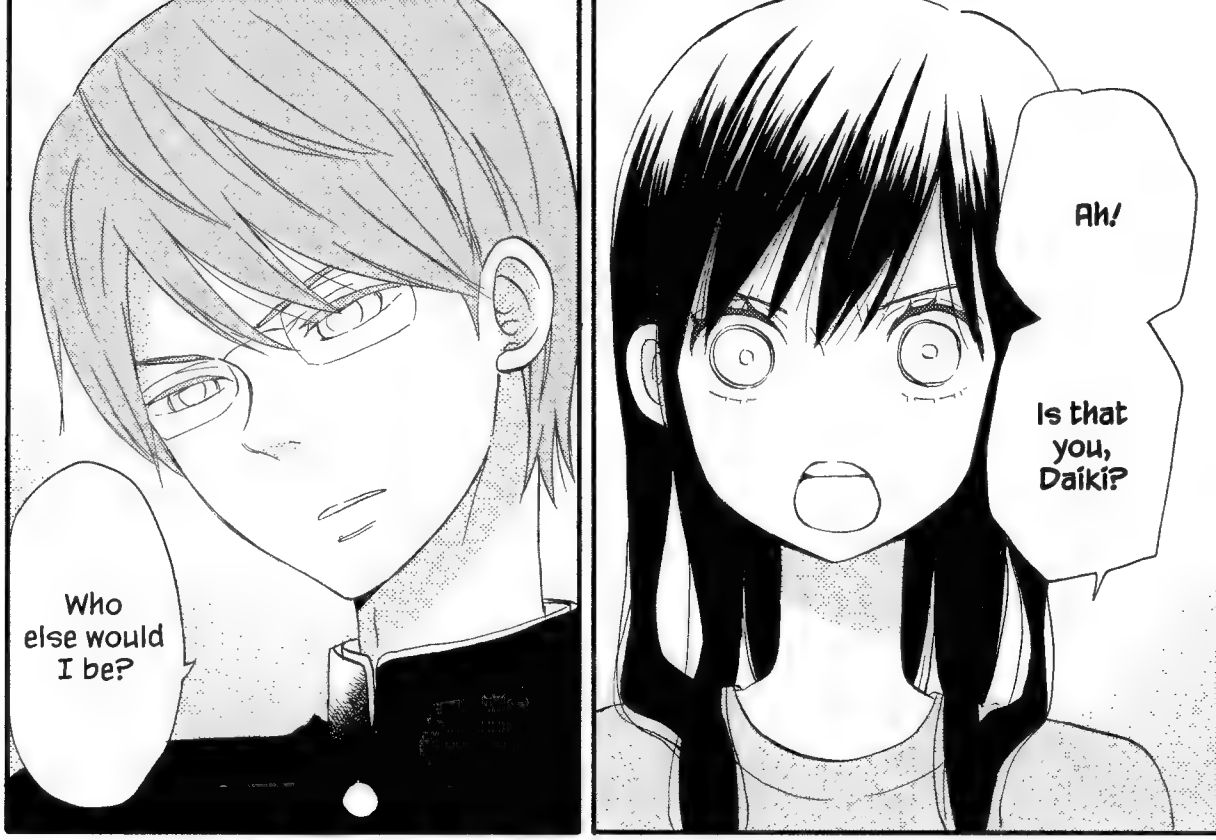
I'll be strong.

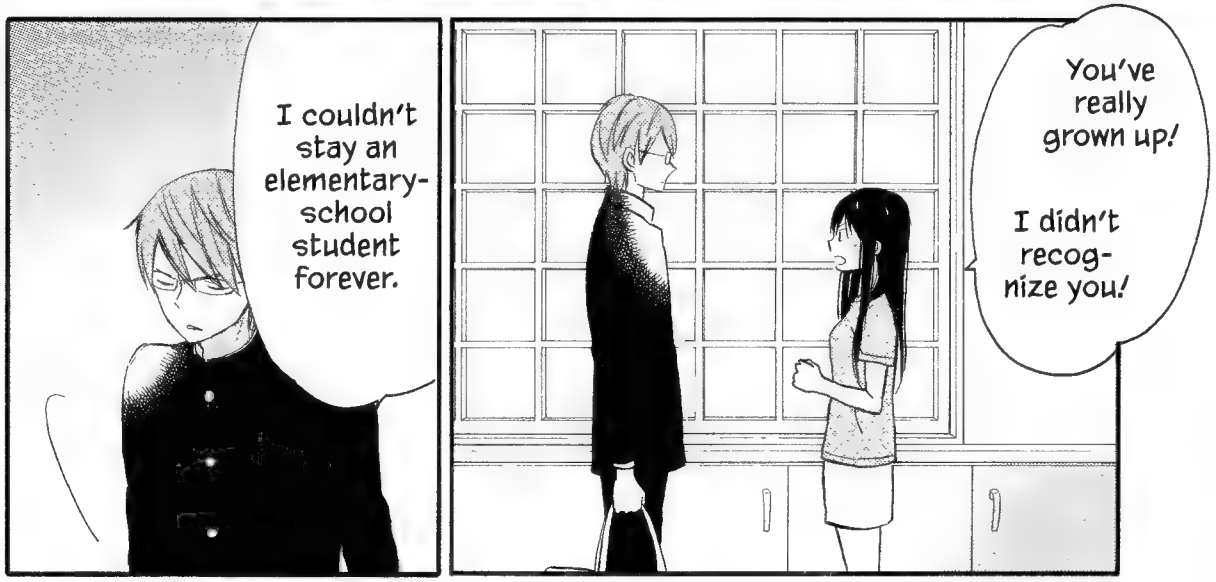
I have no choice but to be their rock!

Daiki and Hina will get scared.

Ah...
Tired...
SIP
SIP
Hee hee.
Were you having a nightmare? You cried out in your sleep.
Oh... I'm at work.
...
You fell asleep.
Oh, Nakamura-san, you woke up.
Huh?
I'll make coffee for everyone.
...but I think it was a sad dream.
I don't remember...

Does Sugimoto-san have a boyfriend?
How can it be? Is it a long-distance relationship?
CLICK
Sugimoto-san seems to be in a good mood.
She said that she's going to meet the person that she's been wanting to for a while now!
What?! A guy?!
Who knows?
DRAGON BALL ATTACK x 10
GACHUNK
Daiki said he didn't want to live with her!
Mao is at the house!
Oh no! Will this workday ever end?!
What will he do if he runs into her on her own?!
INCOMING MESSAGE
Frm Daiki
Sub
I'm going to your place today after school.
I'll just let myself in.
What... No way!
...
...


Who else would I be?
Ah!
Is that you, Daiki?


I couldn't stay an elementary-school student forever.
You've really grown up!
I didn't recognize you!

...
He hasn't asked me anything.
I wonder if he knows about me living here.
Y-yeah...

Yes?
Is Hiro at work?
Yes.
Sigh.
You haven't said anything yet...
Right!
Why is it raining?
GRR
I need to hurry!
GRR
GRR
Why is the light red?
Darn it.
GRR
GRR
So she just told him.
What did she say?
She told him that she liked him.
SWOOSH
Really? That's amazing.
...

...when I said I liked you.
I was just joking...
That's just like her.
She must've been worried about staying with me and causing me trouble.

Welcome back.
Yeah, I got stuck in the rain.
Hiro, you're soaking wet.
Towel.
Towel.
I came straight from school.
You could've at least changed!
I'm home! D-Daiki, it's been a long time.
You came in your school clothes?
Well, then, let's have some tea.
You came to visit the university, right?
...

Oh!
And also to visit their grave.
THUD THUD THUD THUD
SLAM
Hey.
So obvious..
I'll be in my room.
I just remembered I have something to do.
Kind of...
Did she tell you?
Hina said she was gonna stay where she is for another year.
You said that already.
Oh... right.
It's been a long time.

CLATTER
...
Then why are you living together?
I told you I was against it.
Are you and Mao dating?
No, we're not.
Mao's family is still alive.
Even if they're alive...
...she can't live with them.

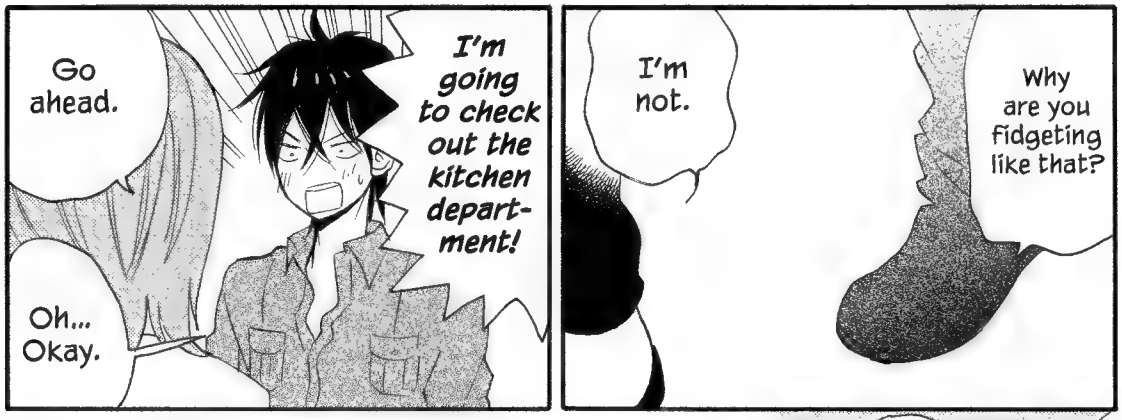
But they're alive.
You didn't cry when Mom and Dad died.
And now you live in this house with a stranger like it's no big deal.

もくもくもく
SMOKE
SMOKE
SMOKE
...
But I...
ばん
WHAM
ばん
WHAM
I was ironing...
...and a fire started!
Mao...
カタ...
CLATTER
SNIFF くん
SNIFF くん
What's that smell?
バン
SLAM
What's going on?!

SIZZLE
プス
プス
SIZZLE
PANT
はー
PANT
はー
It's safe now...
That was classic! What an idiot!
SMOKE
もく
SMOKE
もく
Daiki, get some water.
Got it!
SMOKE
もくもく
SMOKE
CLANG
ドタバタ
CLANG
CLANG
ドタ
ACK
キャ
ACK
ギャ
WAH
わ
You almost burnt the house down.
Is anything else on fire?
N-no.
Well, well...
Sorry... I thought I'd at least be able to iron...
Ah!
What now?
It made a hole.

What?!
Well, since we're going to visit the grave tomorrow, shall we go shopping?
Mao can reimburse me for that T-shirt.
Well, well...
Mao's just doing her best.
GRR
Seriously, though, what would you do if there really was a fire?
GRR
GRR
Huh?
It's gonna have to be cheap!
You're really gonna get me one?
Urk...
Anything is fine. Just leave me out of it.

All right! I'll go pick one out!
Don't run off.
Pick me out a cool one, okay?
I know!
FIDGET
そわ
そわ
FIDGET
FOCUSED
ランラン
Not this one...
Or this one, either...


Why are you fidgeting like that?
I'm not.
I'm going to check out the kitchen department!
Go ahead.
Oh... Okay.

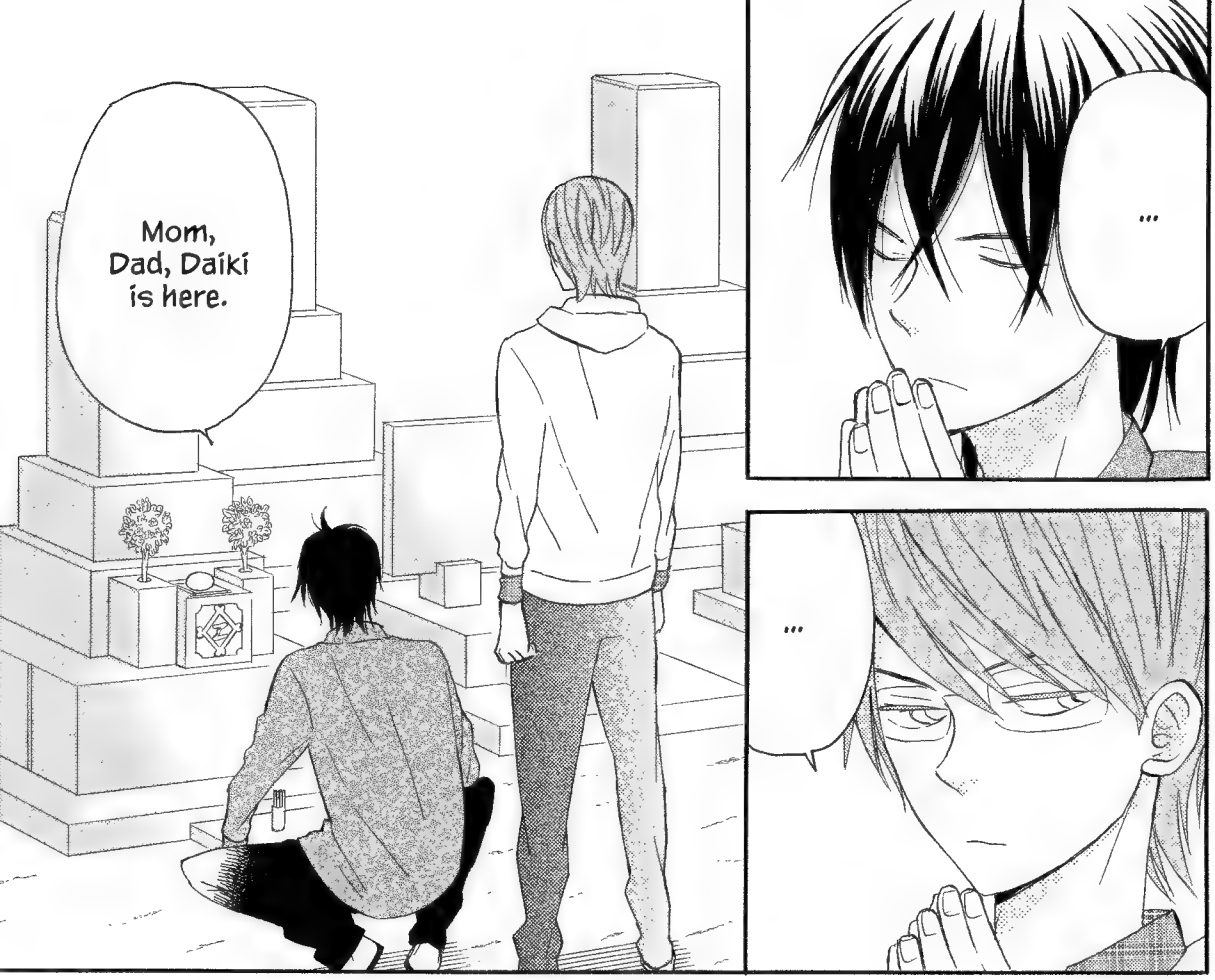
I'll be right back!
...
Not this, either...

My brother...
Pretty much.
Is he always like this?
Hiro?
Even when Mom and Dad died...
...he never once cried.
I thought he was just bottling it up.
But now I'm not so sure.

He's still holding it in now.
He's holding it in.
The truth is, Hiro is really lonely.
That's why he wants you guys to come home.
That goes for you, too, Daiki.
Oh!
Wh-what?!

...
DOOM
This...
This Super Special Miracle character T-shirt is so cute.
DOG
Hmph...
It's not bad.
ACK
I'll get this one.
ACK
Oh, did you find a nice T-shirt?
Yup!
Well, let's go visit the grave, then.

Mao.
I'll wait here.
...
...
Oh.
I'll get ahold of you when we're done.
We'll go eat upstairs before heading home.
Okay.
Right...
We'll be back soon.



*Total reliance upon the compassion of Amida Buddha

Having Mao around has made that desire even stronger.
DRIP
Daiki, you don't know what I really want, huh?
I...
...really want all of us to live in that house together again.
SSSHHH
Rain, huh?
Yeah...
She's still worried about Mao.
And about me.
Mom used to say, "Mao, eat dinner here."
I feel like I can still hear her say that.

It reminds me of her.
You always did hate the rain.
Look at your face.
Mom always brought us our umbrellas.
How nostalgic...
Well, it is...
No, it's not!

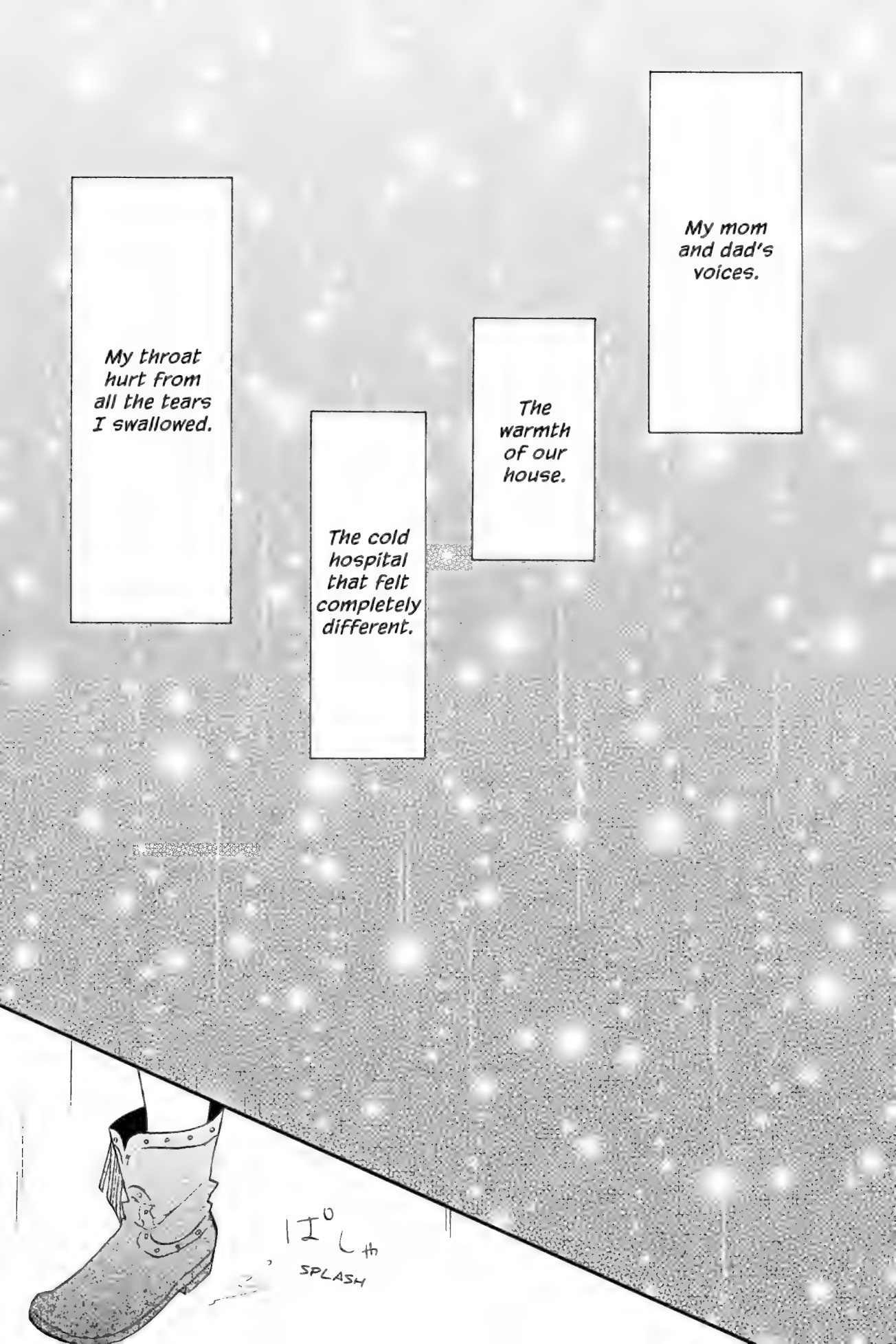
...but it isn't.
Should we head back?
Mao is waiting.
We can make a dash for the department store.
It reminds me of her.
DRIP
DRIP

My mom and dad's voices.

The warmth of our house.

The cold hospital that felt completely different.

My throat hurt from all the tears I swallowed.

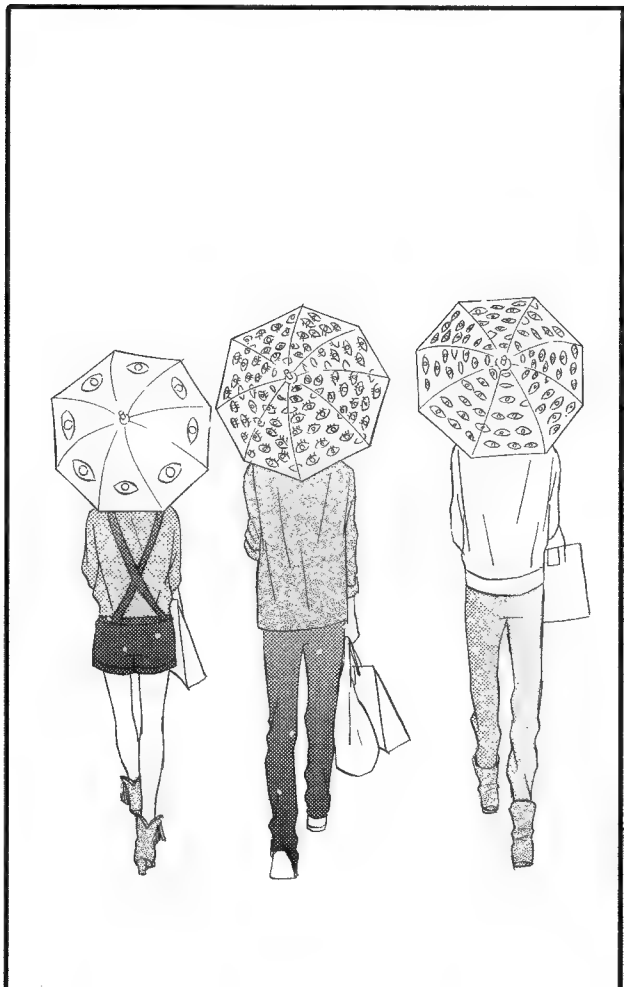


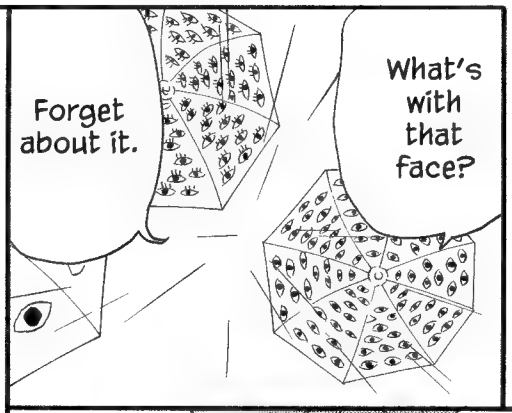
I brought umbrellas.
Hiro.
Daiki.
?

There were some cute ones on sale...
...and it started raining...
Mao.
We were just reminiscing about something like this.
Huh? What did I do?
Ha ha ha!
BUWA
Huh...
But the Super Special Miracle characters are so cute...
A hundred eyes.
What is this? It's atrocious!
...
POP
It's not bad.
You have strange taste.
What's cute about it?
I can't believe you!
You're the one who's strange, Hiro.

?

Let's go back.
I think I agree with you, Hiro.




Forget about it.
What's with that face?

Hiro never laughed whole-heartedly like this.
It's true...

Not since...
...then.
I've got school.
You're leaving already? I was hoping you'd stay longer.
Yeah.
See you soon.
DOG

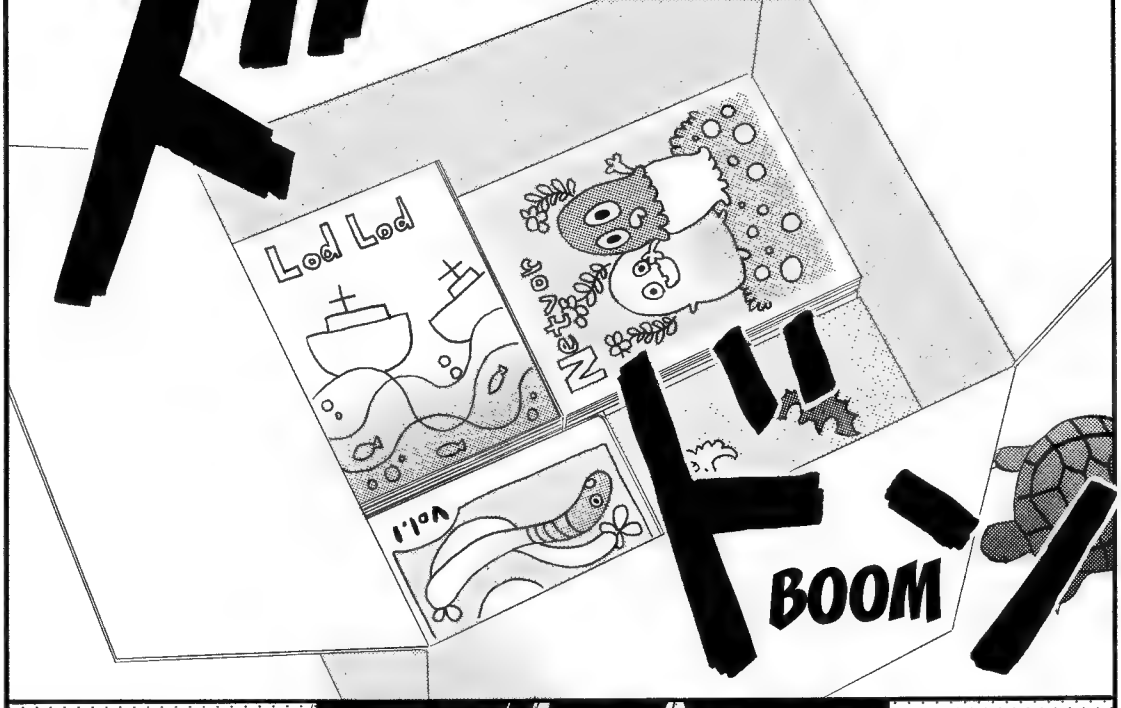
?
...
I'll talk to the old man about moving back here as soon as possible.
Really?
Thanks.
たTMP
たTMP
たっTMP
DOG
Yeah.
See you.
DOG
Th-this is for you.
It's a matching T-shirt.

Take good care of my brother.
Yes.
For me?
?
What the heck?
Is that supposed to make me happy?
Hiro, that T-shirt suits you.
Hold on! I don't get it!
Leave it to me!
...
Bye.
Leave it to me!
I'm the one taking care of her!

Yeah.
Isn't that great, Hiro?
DOG
It's all thanks to you, Mao.
Not!
More importantly, clean up already.
Just frying eggs caused a disaster in the kitchen!
What does that mean?!
NOTES
I wish and pray that everyone returns to his side.

story 7

Radical's Crush


Lod Lod
Vol.1
BOOM

Oh, this is for you, Magyo.
He has too much stuff, so he sent some of it here.
For some reason, he likes things from the Czech Republic and Russia.

Hiro, what is this?
Daiki's stuff.

How mean... What is it?
Magyo, this is to thank you for the T-shirt.
He's right!
It's written "Magyo" on here.
Mao!

Whaaaaa!
DVD
Chonmage
ピカー
FLASH
Does Daiki have ESP about what I'm into?
It's Chonmage! So cute!
I think he just made a good guess based on your strange taste.
It is pretty miraculous, though
All I get is a book ...?
What a jerk.
RIP
I'll kill him...! But I'm kind of happy...
*Easy Cleaning Tricks
If he's sending his stuff here, that means Daiki is really planning to come back.
Hiro.

Hiro seemed happier with Daiki around.
...
That's great.
I'm happy for him.
That's true.
SCIENCE

I see.
She said she can't decide anything for sure right now.
Yeah.
Did Hina-chan respond to your mes-sage?
...is actually pretty selfish.
I realize that asking everyone to come live here...
She has her current life to think about, after all.

Be quiet!
I'll continue to stay here for a while, so cheer up, okay?
Ouch.
But...

That's harsh.
You're right.

Hina-chan must feel the same way.

If it were me, I'd be happy...
...to have someone ask for me to come home.

Oh, no...
I feel a little relieved... That's bad.

It's been one month since I moved here.

My dad said he would come pay for my room and board every month...

I wonder if he'll come...

...tomorrow?

The day after tomorrow?

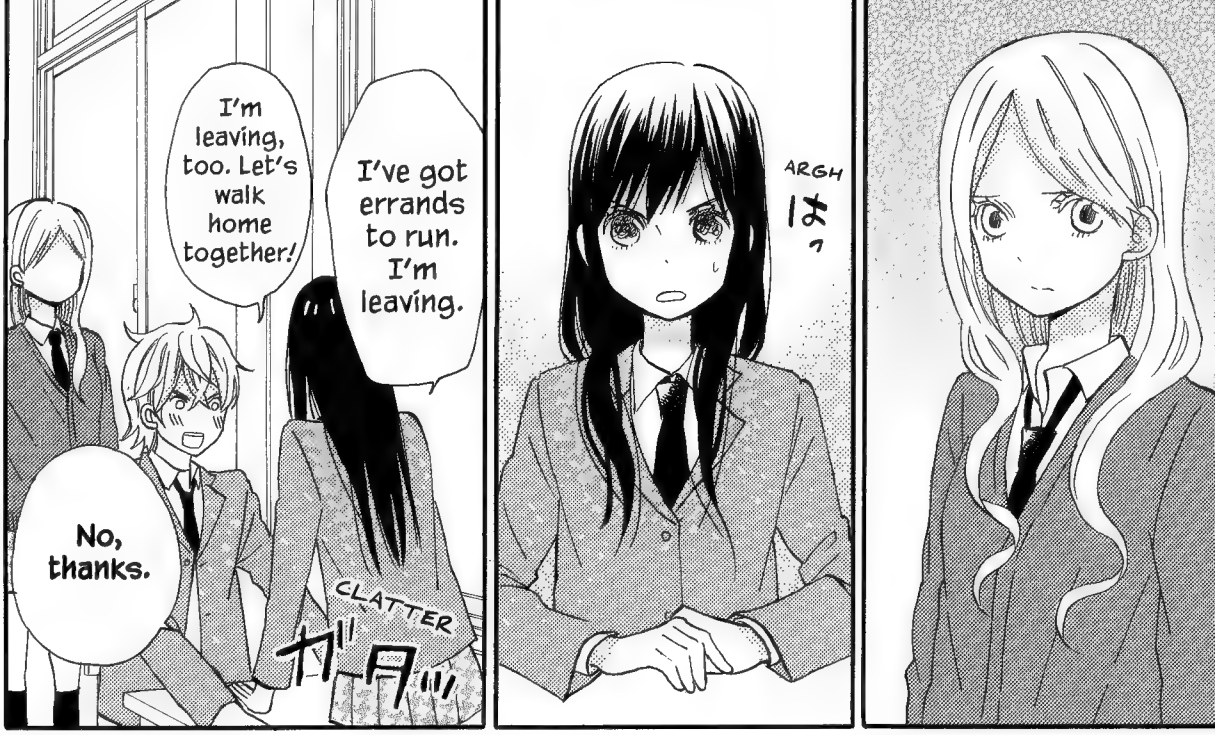
Or the day after that?

I wonder if he ever wishes, even a little, that I would go back?

Does he even remember me?

Huh? Really?
Every-thing's okay now.
I promise.
Do you promise that you won't tell Chi-chan?
Also...
I-I'm sorry, Oda-kun!
It wasn't really about my mom. It was about the guy I like.
Are you serious?

But he rejected me.
Huh?!
DOOM
BRIGHTEN
はぁ
What are you two talking about?
Nothing.
Oh, you must be so sad...
I'm sorry, I'm sorry...
Don't act happy!
Motomiya, you can come to me for advice any time!
I'm fine now!
Be quiet! This is a private conversation!
I didn't ask you!


I'm leaving, too. Let's walk home together!
I've got errands to run. I'm leaving.
No, thanks.
CLATTER
ARGH

Bye-bye.
Sorry, Chi-chan! I've got to stop by a friend's house today.
What?

I promised to stop by Radical-san's house today.
Oh, well, it's not like I was lying.
I got flustered and rushed off.

She even asked that I go in my school uniform.
Welcome to my house, Kuukai-san.
Thank you for having me.
Oh! I love your high-school uniform! It's fabulous!
Really?
Yes! It's so cute. Thank you!
You don't have work today?
Thanks for inviting me.
I got off at 3:00 PM today.

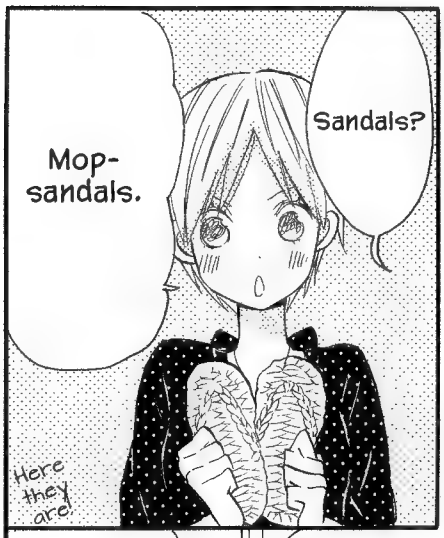
So you live by yourself?
Yes. Oh, you don't need to be so polite. It's a habit for me, so just ignore it.
She has so many history books...
Wow...
Wow.
She has a lot of figurines, too.
?
Oh! Please don't look at that! Just forget about it!
TA-DA
You have a lot of historical stuff...
It's amazing...
Yes, it's my thing.

Rat snakes?
Ma-kun plays with Japanese rat snakes using his small member!
Ma-kun?
So cute and cool.
Ma-kun is so cute!
ピコーン
Oh! She must be talking about the guy she likes!
Ping Pong
Ma-kun actually refers to Masamune Date.
Y-yeah.
It's weird, right?
A business trip? That's so funny!
Is that a business trip?
He wears a white robe and goes to Odawara to cause mischief.
Oh, right, you updated your posts.
It must make work more interesting, but...
Radical-san works with a very strange person...

When I first discovered your blog, I was deeply moved.
Yes.
There are lots of meaningless blogs out there, but yours was like a godsend.
The couple?
From the start I felt a connection to the couple.
I write my blog on the computer, but you only use your cell phone, right?
I don't have a computer I can use at the house I'm staying at...
I couldn't use the computer back home, either, for that matter...
The house you're staying at?
The truth is... It's complicated, but...right now...I'm...
...living with the person I like.
You're cohabi-tating?!
But you're in high school!
No! It's not like that!

Well, whatever the reason, it's wonderful that you can live together.
I can't really explain it more than that.
Um, it's really compli-cated.
I really enjoy my workplace.
NOD
コクリ
Um...
So tell me more about the guy you like.
Yes!
And Ma-kun is so weird.
It sounds like fun...

He takes care of me like a mom.
He must be concerned about you, that's all.
He's like a mom.
Huh?


Sandals?
Mop-sandals.
Here they are.

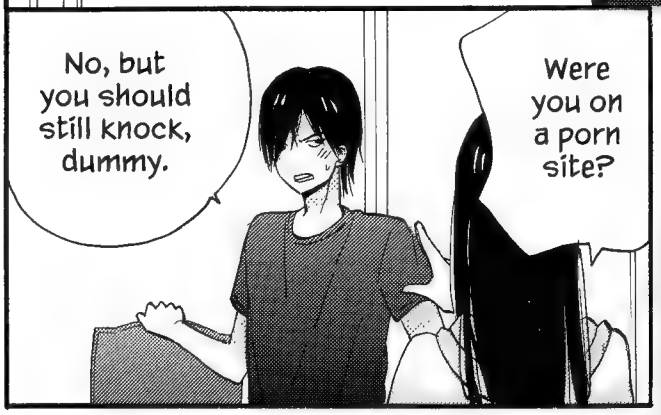
That's a housewife!
What?!
I'm terrible at cleaning. I mop with sandals.
But he likes cooking and cleaning...

I want you to teach me how to make those!
Sure! Let's make some together.
PANT
PANT
I made them with extra cloth I had.

I hope he...
...falls for you, too.
She saw right through me.
We'll make some for your crush, too. I'll get some cloth.
I've got lots of cloth, just in case.
Does Hiro have someone he likes?
I hook it on my feet like this.
Oh...
I've tried not to think about it, but there must be someone.
I wonder if he walks around with someone I don't know.
It doesn't seem like he has a girlfriend, though.
He spends his days off alone.
Wakaba.

Would you like to come by in the morning on the weekend?
Oh, I have to go home. My curfew is pretty early.
Oh, it's already late.
No more thinking about that.
Radical-san is so cute when she talks about the guy she likes.
It's decided, then!
Yes!
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
It's fun talking with Radical-san.
I want to hear more about Ma-kun.
Yeah, I can't get enough of him.

Chatting about guys we like...
...is super fun.
Th-this...
FWIP
...
Hiro!
Smug face
SLAM
I have to show them to Hiro!
...is a success!


No, but you should still knock, dummy.
Were you on a porn site?

Ack! Mao!
CLATTER

Hey!
Are you a middle-school student or something?
Porn site!♪ Porn site!♪

ピーン
SHOCK

Today, too, Takashi and his dog, Croquett

He's lonely. Even with me, he sometimes

There are people he sees every day at wo

I'm sad that I can't see him.

"Kaoru"

Takashi unexpectedly called out my nam

...my blog?

Today, too, Takashi and his dog, Croquette

He's lonely. Even with me, he sometimes

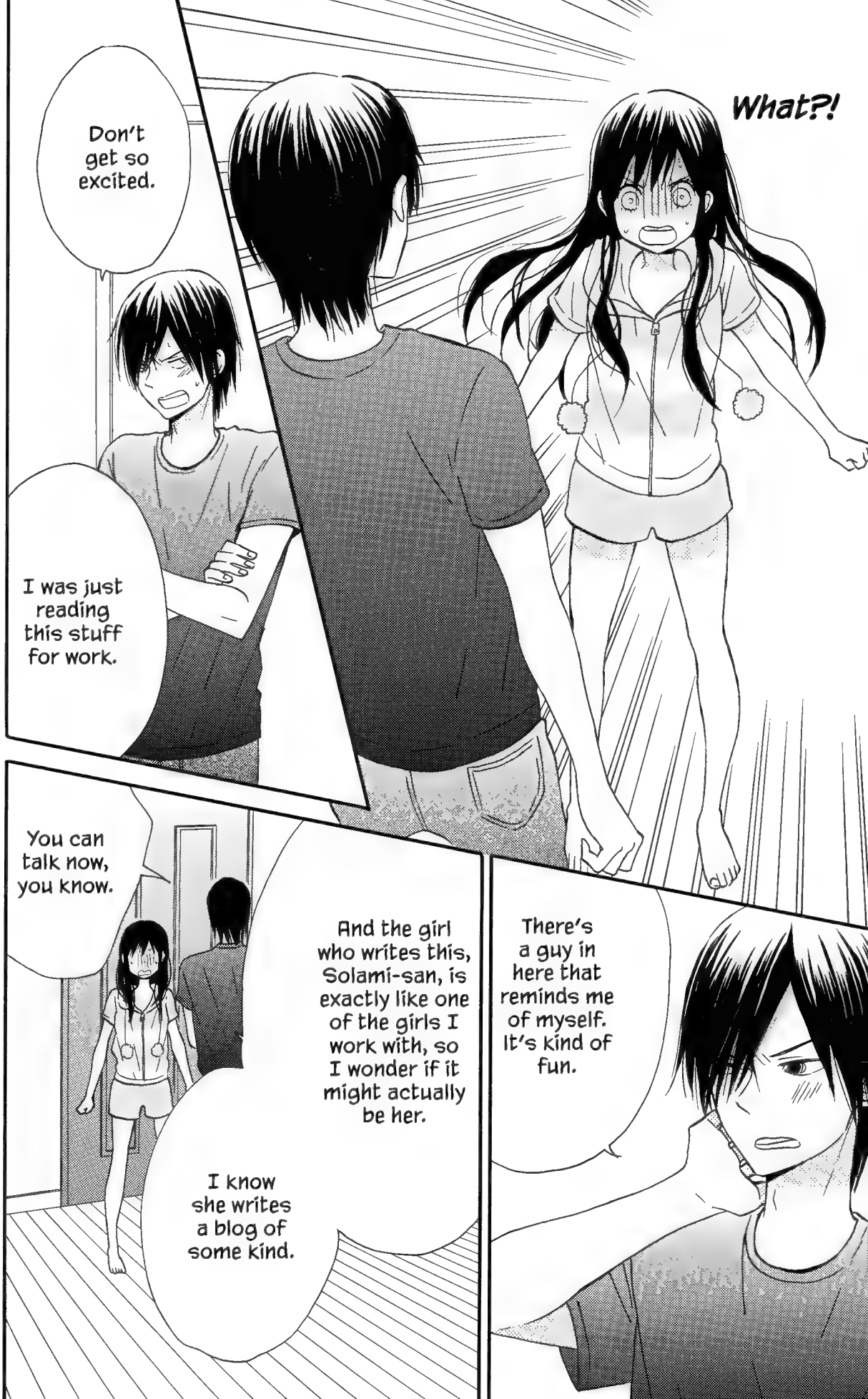
There are people he sees every day at w

I'm sad that I can't see him.

"Kaoru"

Takashi unexpectedly called out my

Is that...


What?!
Don't get so excited.
I was just reading this stuff for work.
There's a guy in here that reminds me of myself. It's kind of fun.
And the girl who writes this, Solami-san, is exactly like one of the girls I work with, so I wonder if it might actually be her.
I know she writes a blog of some kind.
You can talk now, you know.

My eyes met Takashi's eyes, and we stared at each other for a moment...
I can't believe Hiro has been reading my diary and my fantasies...
I'm kind of confused, actually.
It's Kuukai, not Solami!
I'm way more confused!
Hey, what's wrong?
Aaaaaaah!
I...want... to...die...
Waaaaaaah...!
ピンポーン
DING DONG
Don't get so worked up that you start to cry.
CLENCH
CLENCH

?
It's your dad.
He called earlier.

I'll be right back.
He must've brought payment for room and board.
My father...!
...there's something scary...
...about him.
...about my father...
When Hiro talks...

...
When I was really little...
...my father was kind to me.

Do you want to see him?
Are you gonna stay here?

Are you okay with not seeing him?
Is it all right to leave things the way they are?
I...
I...
I want to stay here longer.

I want to stay with Hiro.
Okay. Stay here, then.
I'll be right back.
SLAM
バタン…

My dad came.
He didn't...
...forget about me.
Will my dad come inside?
What will Hiro say when he comes back in?
Does he resent me?
Does he pity me?

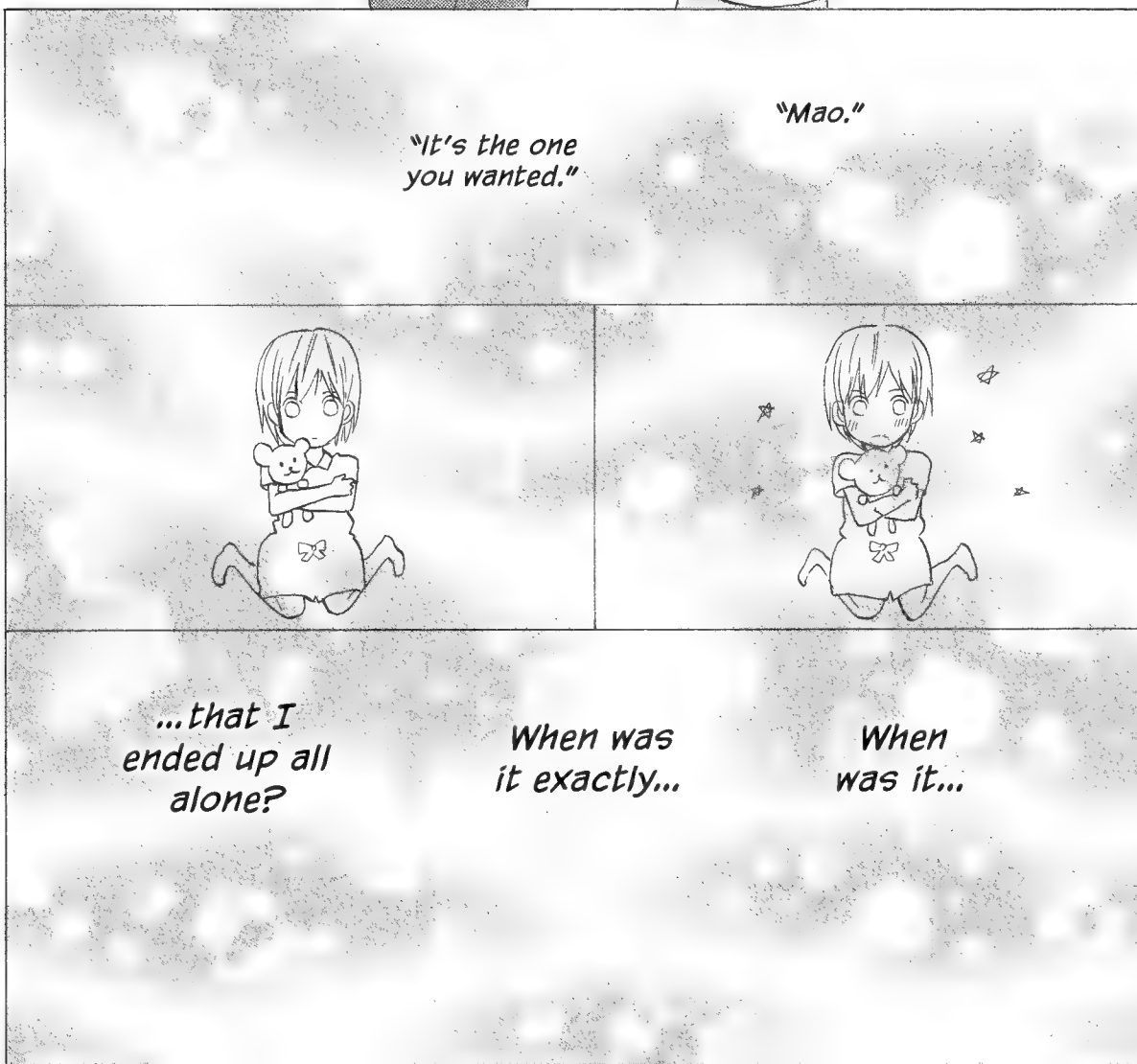
...I have no idea what to do.

Whatever ends up happening...

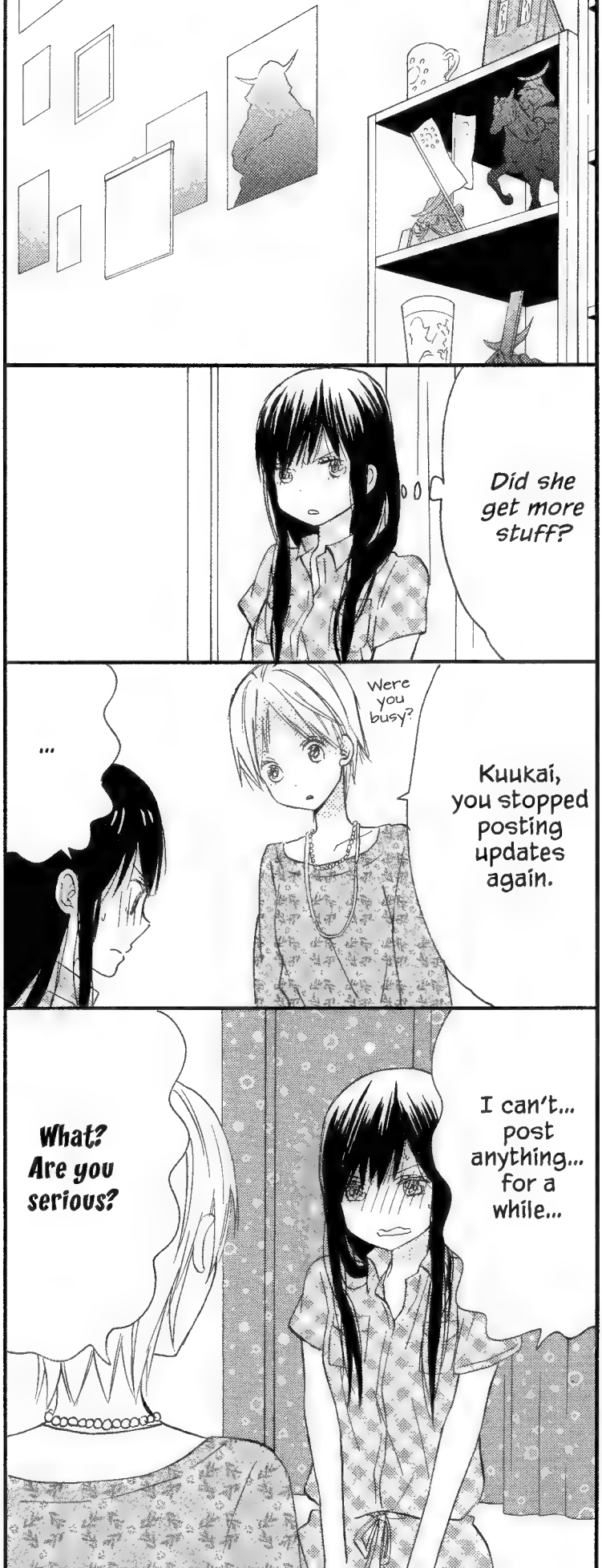
びくっ
JOLT
ガチャ
KER-CHAK
Mao.
Are these...
...mop-sandals?
...
They were pretty hard to make.
I can imagine. And you have bad coordination, too.
How did you do it?
I did.
Did you make these for me, Mao?
I was surprised, too.
They're supposed to be good for cleaning floors.
You just put them on.
My father...

...left this house...
You can...
...wash the floor...
...just wearing these...
...without seeing me.
RUB
Don't touch me, you jerk.

RUB
RUB
RUB
RUB
RUB


"It's the one you wanted."
"Mao."
...that I ended up all alone?
When was it exactly...
When was it...

TAP
とん
I don't know when you two will understand each other...
...but until then, it's fine for you to stay here.


Did she get more stuff?
Were you busy?
...
Kuukai, you stopped posting updates again.
What? Are you serious?
I can't... post anything... for a while...

Why...

...does Hiro...

...always...

...say the words...

...I want to hear?

You have a lot going on, huh?
I'm sorry to hear that.
Oh, I'll make some tea.
I'll help you.
SLIP
Oh!
BAM
Eek! Are you okay?
Ouch...

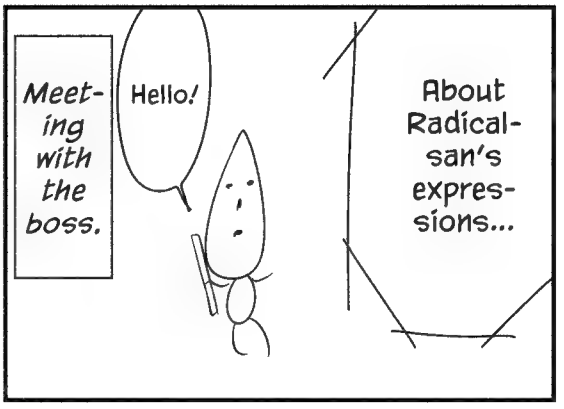
*Lady of Camellias
Wah! Ah ha ha!
My expensive books...
I made it fall.
Oh! The box you kept hidden...

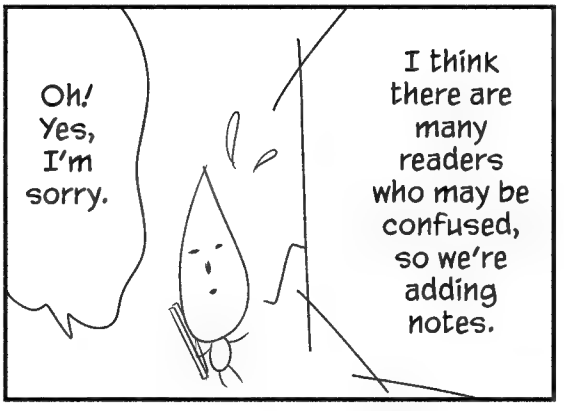
Wah ah ha ha!
...
Huh?
There's a guy I like at work...
I know she...
...has a blog of some kind.
Huh?
I see him every day, so I can't forget him.

You saw the picture...
...of the guy I like.
Huh?

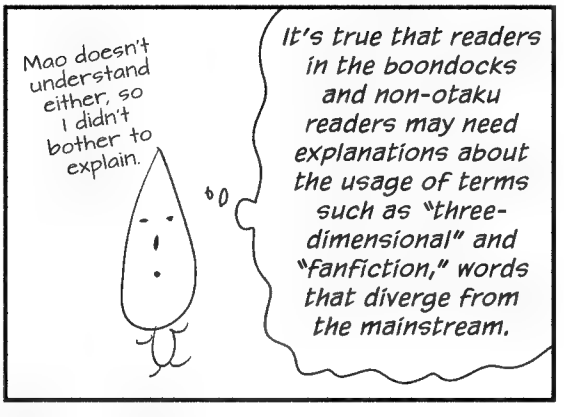
I'll send out four-part comics describing my daily work with this manga.

I want to do this if I have extra pages in the middle of the book.





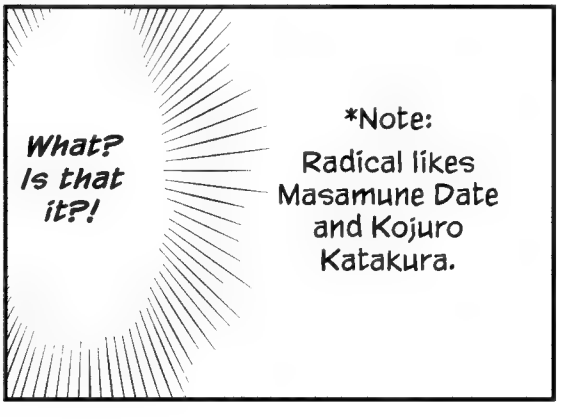
This is me, Taamo.


Mao doesn't understand either, so I didn't bother to explain.
It's true that readers in the boondocks and non-otaku readers may need explanations about the usage of terms such as "three-dimensional" and "fanfiction," words that diverge from the mainstream.

I drew everything fully digital, so I'm worried about the outcome.

I'm sorry that it's hard to read. I'm sorry about my animal drawings, too. I'll do my best.

Revision.

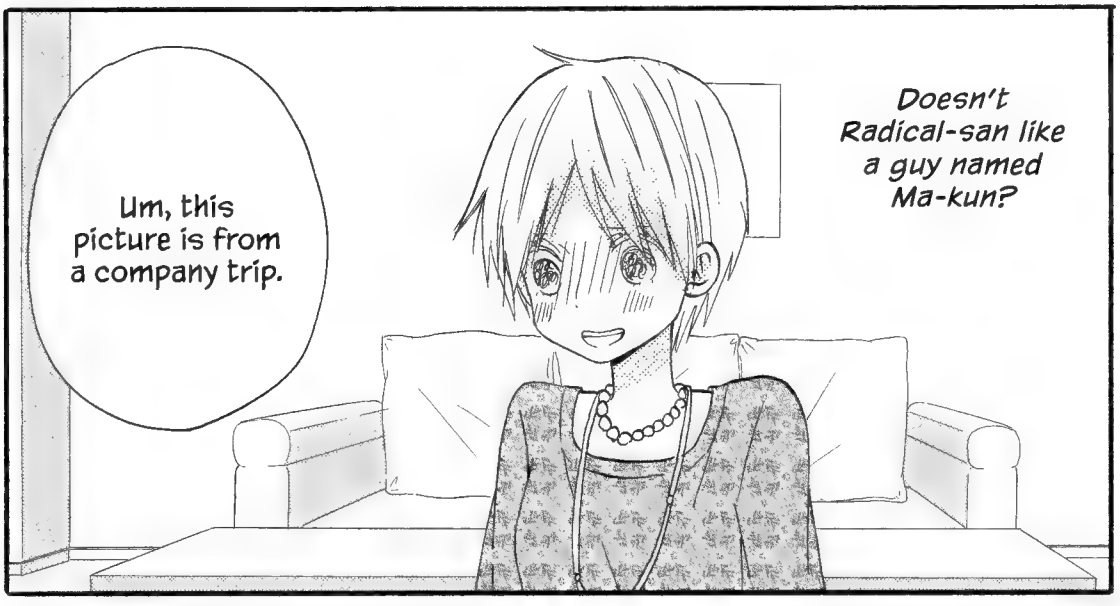


story 8 Confession

You saw the picture of the guy I like.

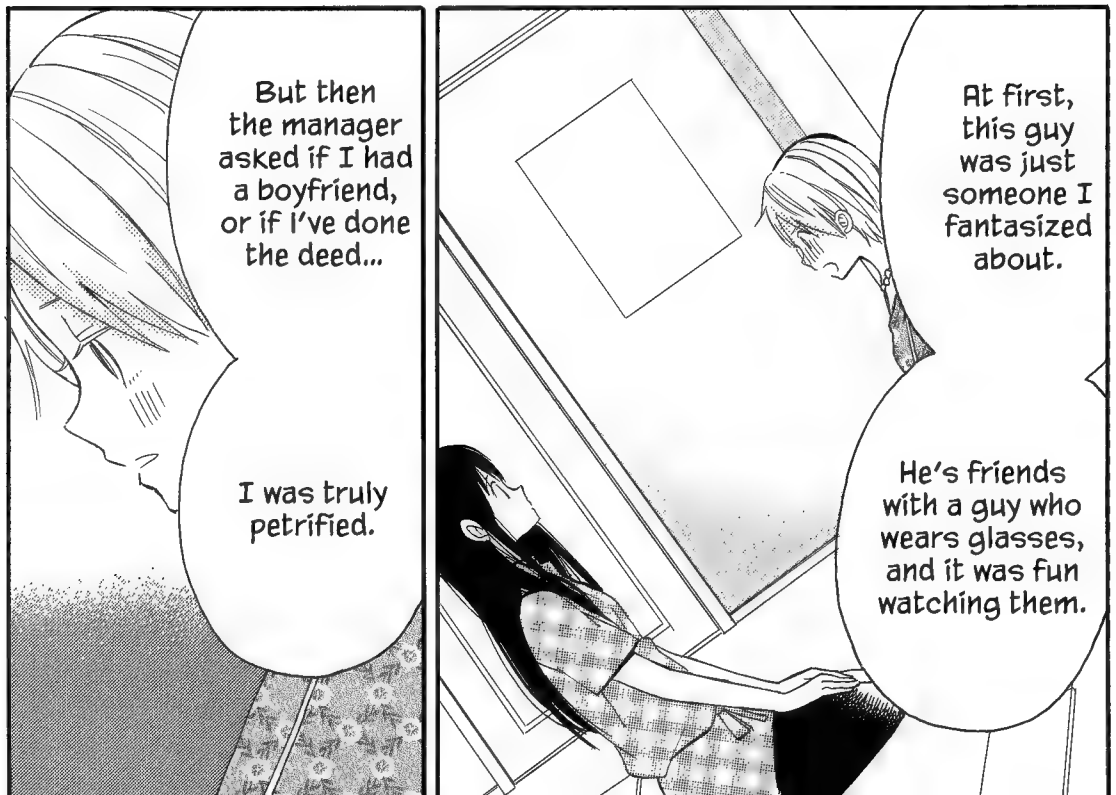
...Radical-san likes?

The guy...



I acted all casual while I was taking the picture, but I was so nervous.
And he doesn't fight with Japanese rat snakes.
There's no "Ma" in "Hiro."

I went to an all-girls school starting in middle school.
He doesn't go outdoors in a white robe.
I can't even imagine dating anyone.
A high-school girl would laugh at me if she heard this!
I've hardly ever spoken to a guy.


But then the manager asked if I had a boyfriend, or if I've done the deed...
I was truly petrified.
At first, this guy was just someone I fantasized about.
He's friends with a guy who wears glasses, and it was fun watching them.

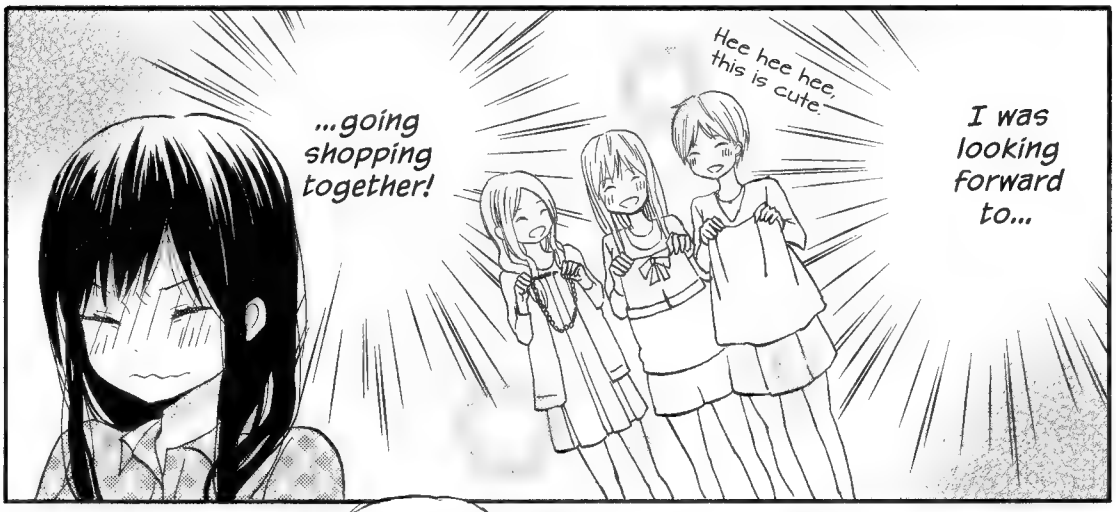
It was probably just my imagination...
...but I couldn't help myself.
He interrupted our conversation...
...and casually asked me to go make tea, giving me a chance to escape.
That sounds like something Hiro would do.
Somehow.
Although I'm 20 years old...!
Anyway, it's my first crush since elementary school!

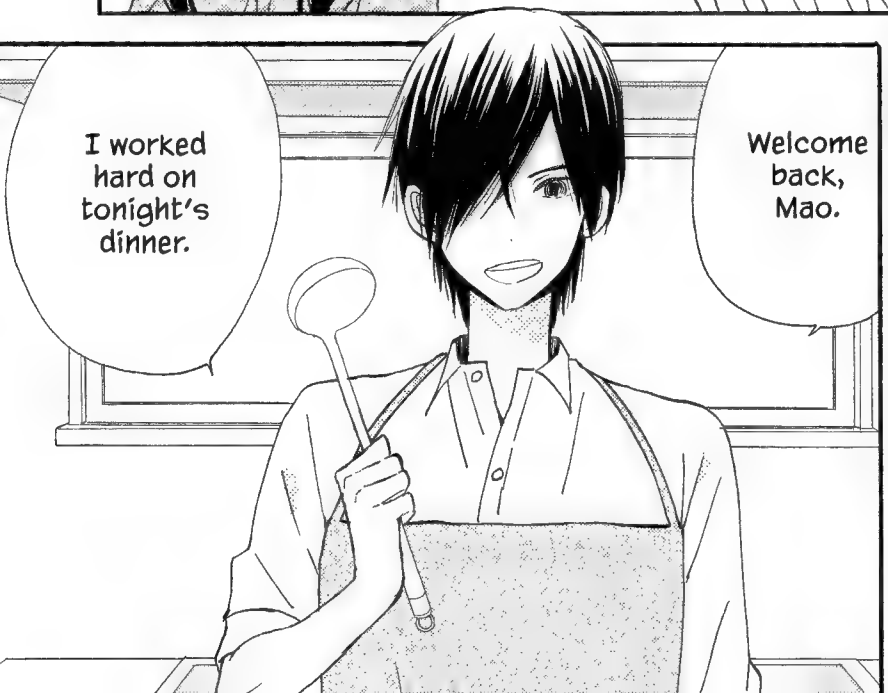
It's not cohabitation!
It's the same thing! Compared to what I've just shared, we're in different worlds.
Go ahead and laugh.
I'm so embarrassed to be telling this to someone who's experienced cohabitation...
The things I was able to speak about today...
...and the things I wasn't able to say...
...sound like they'd come from an elementary-school student.
Wow... Oh...
She...
...really...
...likes him.

CLENCH
But...
You'll get in trouble if you don't go home.
Oh, Kuukai-san, look at the time.
How nice. As someone living alone, I kind of envy you.
I want to be supportive...
...of Radical-san.
I really do...!

I'm sorry, you're not done talking about Ma-kun...
Ma-kun?
This guy isn't Ma-kun.
Ma-kun is Masamune Date.
What?
Oh! That explains the books...!
I'm too shy to tell you his name, so I'll keep it a secret.
He gave me these books, though.
...
Radical
2. Source, origin
Drastic
3. Radix (mathem
Unit (science)

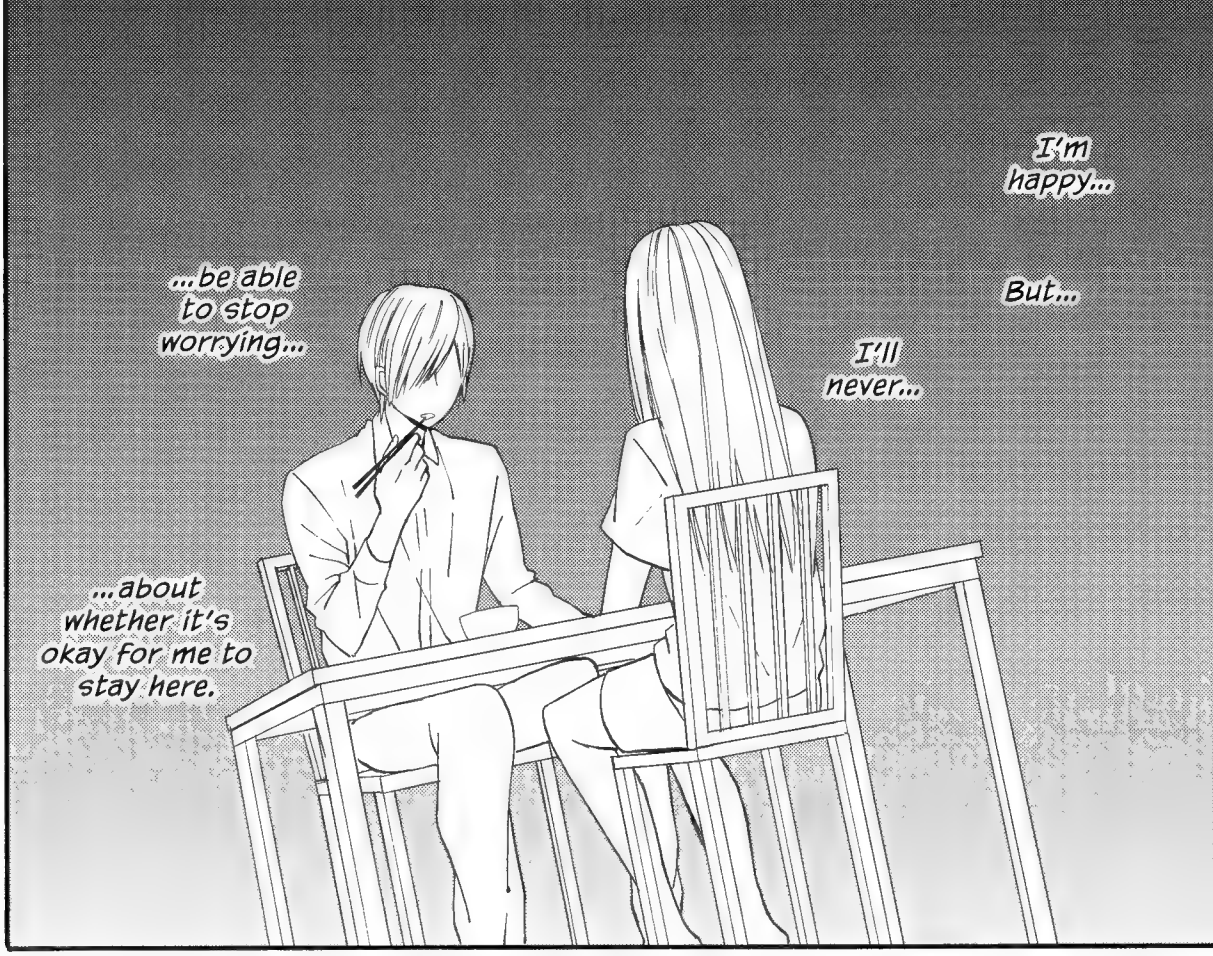
Finally made a friend!
Finally, finally...
Besides Chi-chan.
I finally...
It's Hiro...
...after all.


...going shopping together!
Hee hee hee, this is cute.
I was looking forward to...


I worked hard on tonight's dinner.
Welcome back, Mao.

I'm home!
Woah!
しゃらんら
TA-DA
What are you upset about?
It has something to do with you, but it's none of your business!
?
くるり
WHOOSH
SHOCK

We're celebrating today.
Guess what? Our family is getting bigger!
That's harsh.
Hiro, don't you have someone to go on dates with on your days off...
...instead of spending your time cooking like this?
Is it Daiki? Hina-chan?
The details are a secret.
What?
That's great... Congratu-lations.
I'm happy for you.


I'm happy...
But...
I'll never...
...be able to stop worrying...
...about whether it's okay for me to stay here.

If there's something on your mind, why don't we eat before dealing with it?

The food is great!
I don't understand what's getting you worked up today.

...I'll be a total nuisance.
If Hiro likes Radical-san back...

Does it taste that bad?
Sorry.
UGH
I told Radical-san I was living with the person I like.

Is it better not to ask her about it?
...
I'll be here to listen.
There's no need!
H—
Hiro, you said something earlier...
...about a girl at your company who's writing a blog?
...
Yeah?
What kind of novel?
Um... Short stories?

...
Why do you want to know about my coworker?
...
What else?

I guess I can't make it sound normal, after all.
It's not like I can just ask him if he has a crush on anyone.
That'd be too obvious.
うーん
MMM
Does Mao read that blog, too?
うーん
MMM
You wouldn't ask if you didn't have a reason.
No reason.

SSSHHH
うーん
MMM

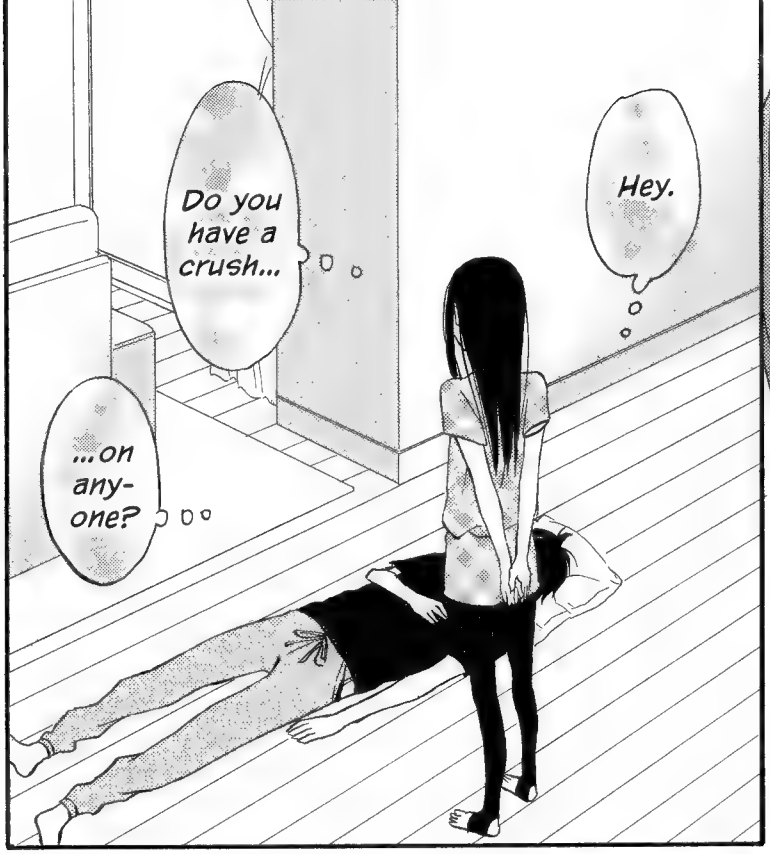
...
SSSHHH
I have no choice but to...
...conduct a thorough investigation.
GRR
GRR
GRR
GRR
GRR
SPLASH
I can't check his messages...!
What am I doing in here?!
I'd feel like a thief or something!

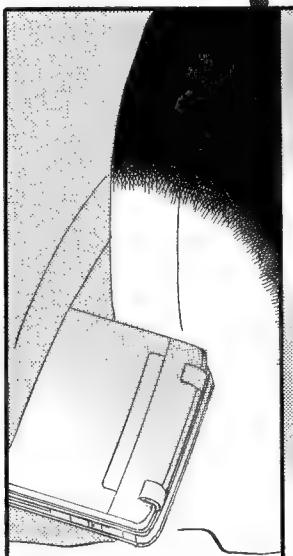
Oh, but I don't know Daiki's contact info!
Maybe I can get Daiki to ask him via text?
~ Even more panicked now.
No... That doesn't make any sense!
I know... I'll ask him through my blog!
← Total panic.
Hiro, do you have a crush on anyone? Someone at work, perhaps?
SLIDE
ガラッ

ACK!
P-pervert!
SLAM
What are you doing?!
Leave my naked body alone!
I was brushing my teeth.
No, you weren't!
Why are you sweating so much?

THUNK
That hurts for different reasons.
I wasn't doing anything! Seeing you naked does nothing for me!
SLAM
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
...
No, I didn't see it!
I think I saw it...!
BADUMP
BADUMP
BADUMP

I have to ask him directly, after all!
はぁ
PANT
PANT
はぁ
PANT
はぁ
じたじた
FIDGET
ARGH!
あー
ARGH!
あー
じたじた
FIDGET
Hiro.





It's such a simple question...

...so why can't I ask him?

GRASP
SNEAK
SNEAK
SNEAK
!!
What are you scheming?
I'm not scheming anything!
Liar! Tell me the truth!
THWACK
Let me go! You perverted jerk!

Looks bad no matter how you look at it
はっ
PANT
I thought that if I looked at your cell phone...
ギリ
NGH
ギリ
NGH
ギリ
NGH
Did I do something wrong? Is it me?
Huh?
...I could find out who your crush is.

Here.
ぽて
PLOP
Don't read any deeper into it.
I was just worried that there might be someone you can't invite over because of me.
Oh.
Look, if you need to.
You can look, but there's nothing there.
ぽん
PAT
Stop worrying about weird stuff.

But I can't help wondering about it.

I can't look at it.

...

I'll be a nuisance, after all.

If Daiki and Hina-chan come back to live here...

If Hiro has a crush on Radical-san...

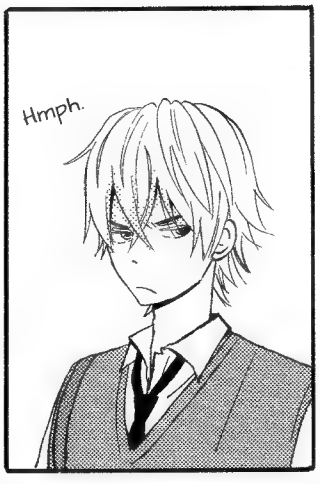
I'm always a nuisance.

No matter where I go...

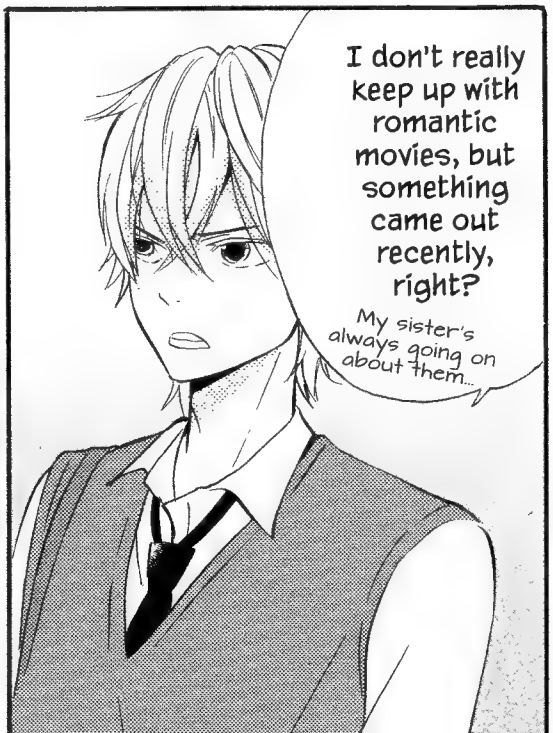
Good morning.
What's that face for?
It's my regular face.

Hey! Good morning, Motomiya.

Let's hang out sometime. Like, say, at the movies?


Hmph.

I'll go if it's a period drama.
A period drama?!


I don't really keep up with romantic movies, but something came out recently, right?
My sister's always going on about them...

...
By the way, you seem down...
Is anything wrong?
Yeah
I'll double-check.
Oh, I think there's a romantic period drama, actually.
...!!
Oh, that came up in my little sister's girly comic yesterday.
Urk.
Something like that?
Does your friend like the same person as you?
No!
Is that why you were rejected?

Huh?
You don't know?
I've been wondering about this for a while, but why do you concern yourself with me, Oda?
What?
It's because I like you.

I know you have a crush on someone.
But it doesn't make a difference.
I'm being serious.
Are you teasing me?
Huh? They're just friends.
You're always surrounded by girls...
Don't run away.
Hear me out.
GRAB
Hey!
...
DASH
...
INCH

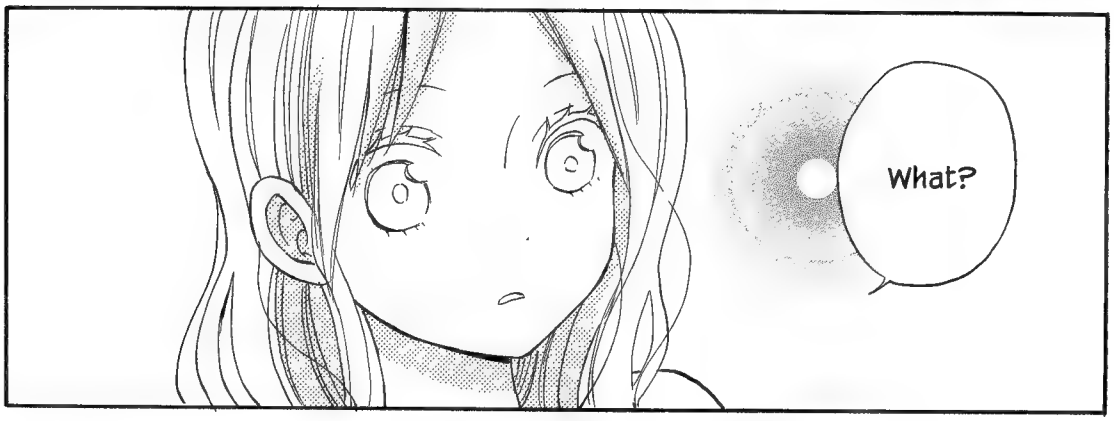
I have lots of friends that are girls because of my sisters.
Now that you mention it, I don't have many guy friends...
No, thanks...
But if you don't like it, I'll stop being friends with them.
With all of them.
I can't just leave you alone.
You're always all by yourself!
Sorry...
I've just never even thought of you...
...that way...

Okay, then, I'll make it so you think of me that way.
I like you.
Why?

...straight-forward?
...can he be so...
How...

I like you.
It's my first crush since elementary school!

Are you two okay?
You're both into the same guy, right?
Hey.


What?

...
It's fine if it's not affecting your friendship...
I'll help you if you want, okay?

I'm home.
YAP!
Huh? What's this? What's this?
PANT
PANT
PANT
I just got home, too.
Welcome back.
PANT
PANT
PANT

Our...new family member is...
...a dog?!
Our new family member.
I hope she gets along with Wakaba.
SNUGGLE
SNUGGLE
I've always wanted a dog to take on walks and stuff...
But now I have you here, Mao.
I thought I couldn't get a dog because I get home from work late some days...
It's scary for a puppy.

What?!
Look.
She's so cute!
Yeah, you're right.
How could you just decide that on your own?!
Walking a dog is a pain.
She's so soft
SNUGGLE
She's a red Shiba Inu. I asked for her a while back, and she finally arrived.
SNUGGLE

That's... the name of the dog in my blog.
How about we name her Croquette?

Ugh...
CUTE
CUTE
Does that mean he wants me here?
Did he say he got it because I'm staying here?
I can't wait to go on walks!
Cute! Cute!
So cute!
Pant
Pant
...where I belong.
I have a place...
I'm so happy.

It would normally remind someone of croquettes, like the food.
C-Croquette is fine. Though it'll remind me of that actor, Korokke.
It feels like I finally have that.
All right, it's decided.
With this dog around, we won't be lonely, even when we're alone at home.

...like everyone else.

...be straightforward...

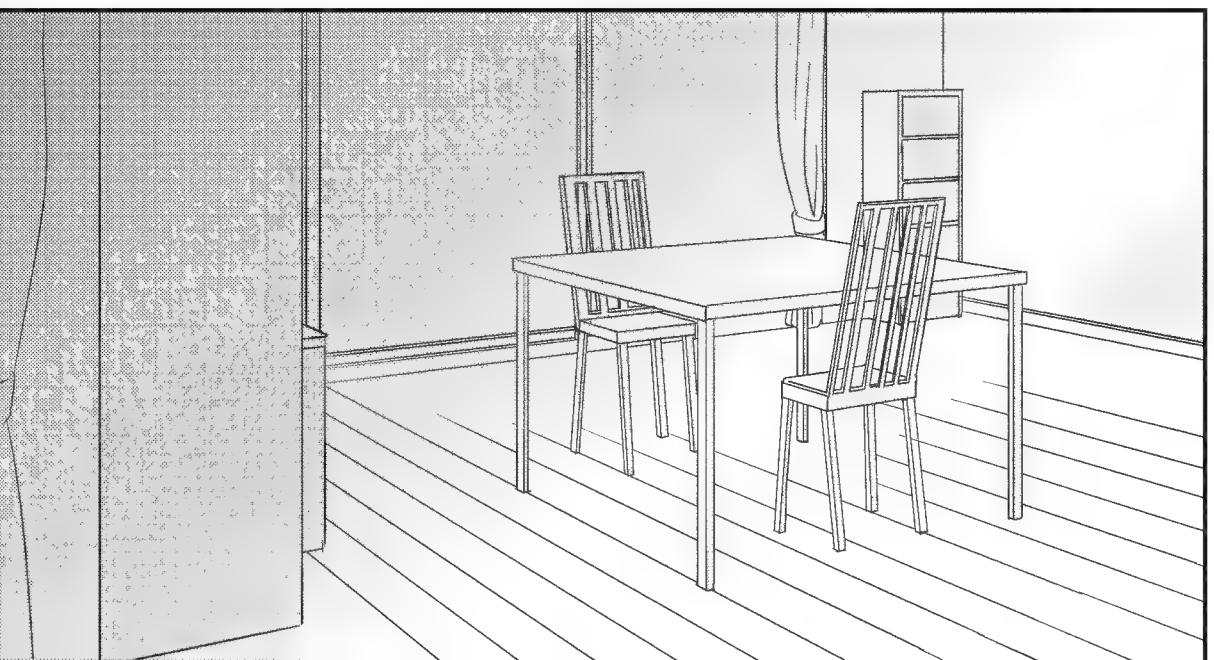
To be continued...

I want a dog!
Cute! Awwwww!
Yay! Yay!
You can all come over today. Okay?
It's cute...
It's so cute. I want to see it in person.
It's still a puppy, so it's chewing on everything.
When do you get a day off, Hiro?
Well, let's forget about Hiro, then.
I have to work after school.
Are you serious?
Then, how about Sunday?
I'm working Sunday.

Hiro...
Are you trying to avoid me?
Why does she think that?
No, I'm not, why?
It's a nuisance for you that I like you, right?
I didn't know...
Liar!
SLAP
...
Ouch...

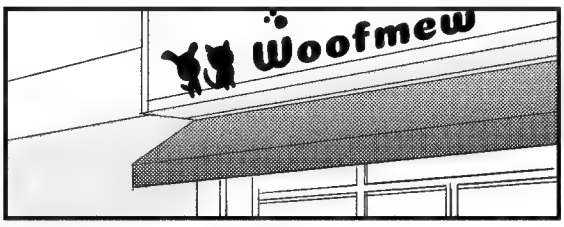
SPLASH
I want to hang out with everyone, too.
SPLASH
CHOP
CHOP
I really do have to go to work.

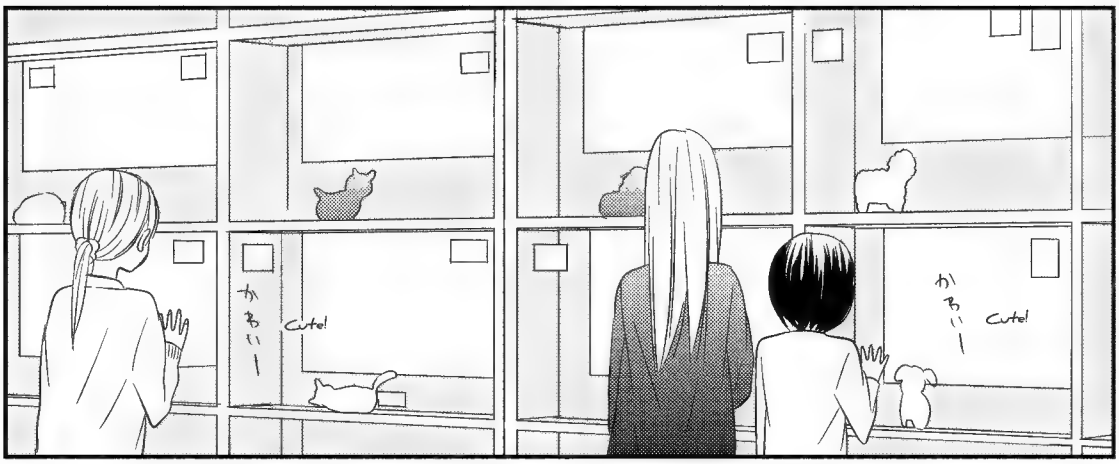
I'm home.
I want to see his dog, too.



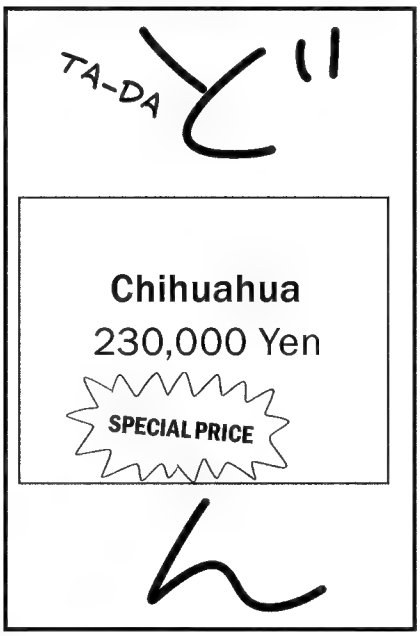
It's so big in here...

KABOOM
ボスッ

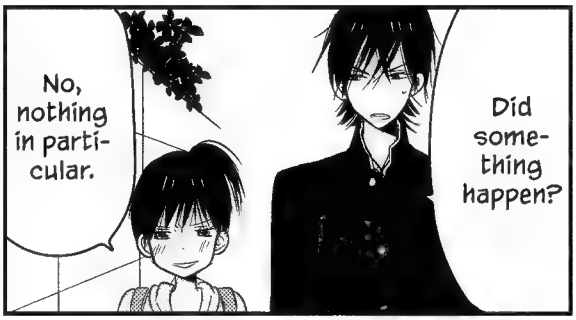

Woofmew


かわいい
Cute!
かわいい
Cute!

It's so expensive!
Special price? How is that a special price?


TA-DA
Chihuahua
230,000 Yen
SPECIAL PRICE

It's not like I could take care of a dog in my situation.
I mean... Even if I had the money...
Would you like to hold it?
Oh, no, thanks...
...
And those two aren't coming back.
What do you want, Mao?
How did you know I was here?
Feels like someone's watching me.
I'm the one who decided to protect our home...
I can't falter in my feelings now.

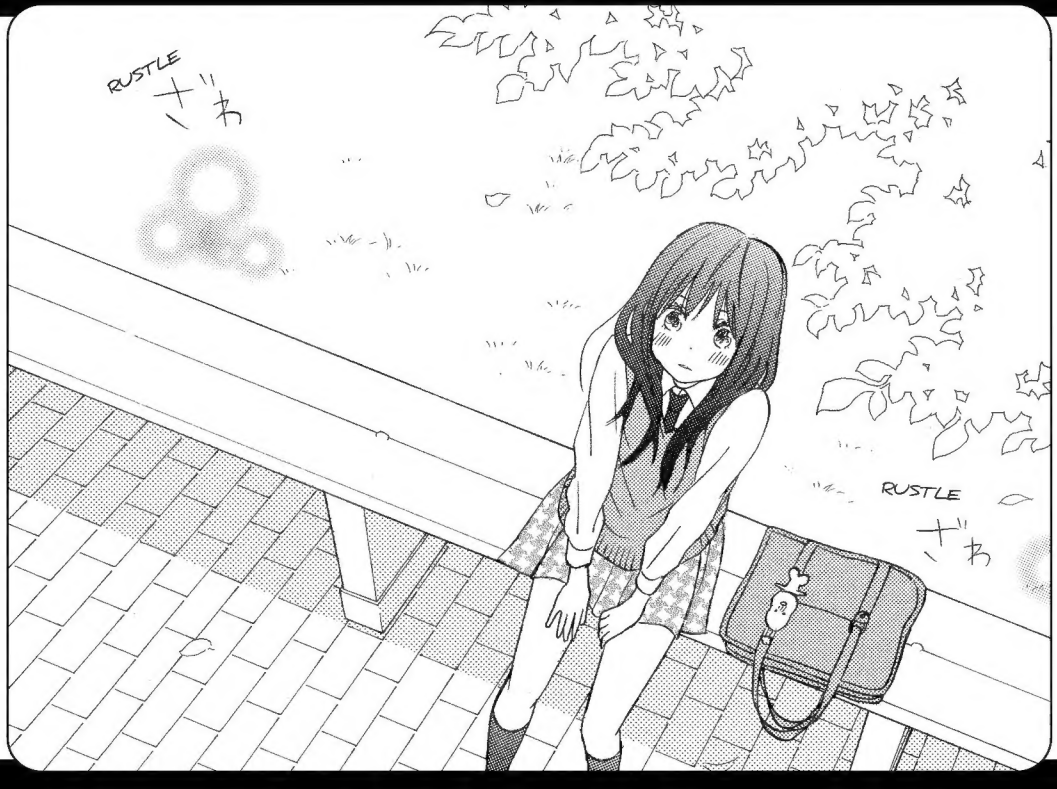


You should treasure it and take care of it yourself.
Oh, but seeing you act so silly just now cheered me up.
I can't get a dog, but maybe I could buy a turtle... Maybe I should go back.
Me, silly?!

End of extra chapter

Unexpected Confessions...

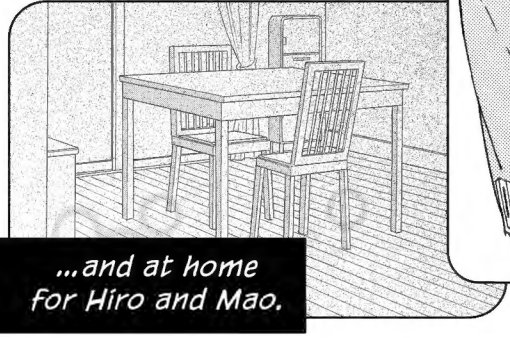
Mao confesses her crush on Hiro, and Oda tells Mao he likes her.



It feels like these confessions are going to cause a big change...

A change at school for Mao...

Will Radical-san make a move?!

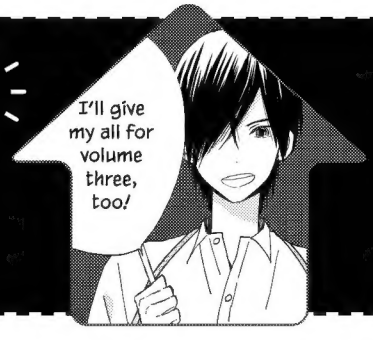


...and at home for Hiro and Mao.

What will happen...?

HOUSE of the SUN 3

Popular right now!



House of the Sun 2

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